



*BC*

NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE



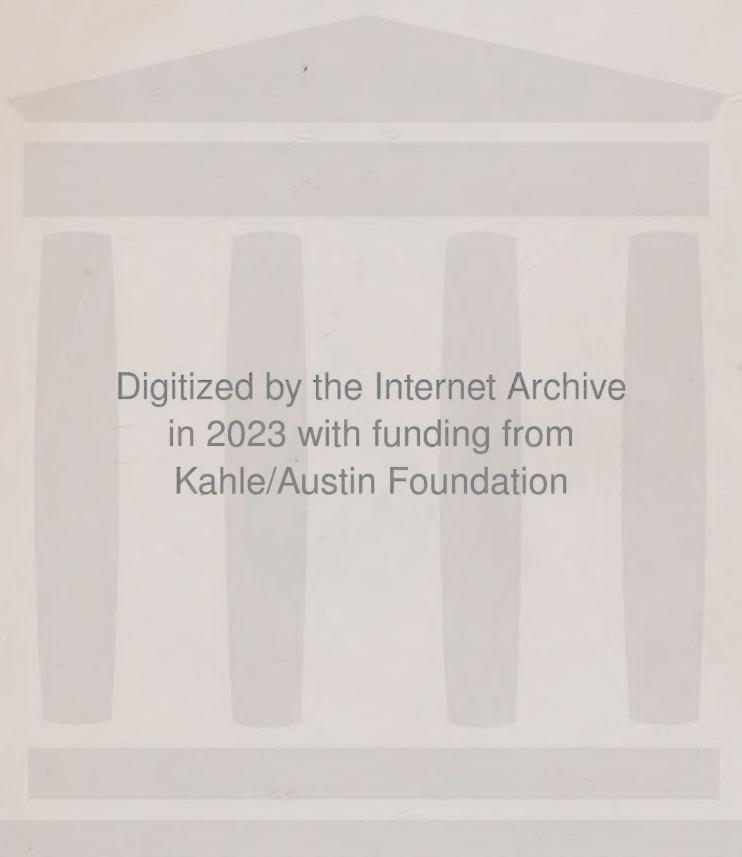
TRENT UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY



Dr R. Sheehy







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
Kahle/Austin Foundation



A HISTORY  
*of the*  
CANADIAN KNIGHTS  
OF COLUMBUS  
CATHOLIC  
ARMY HUTS



*By*  
REV. I. J. E. DANIEL  
*and*  
REV. D. A. CASEY, LITT. D.

D622 .D3

COPYRIGHT  
CANADA, 1922

**158446**

*Lest We Forget*



2



1. Crest of the K. of C. Catholic Army Huts.

2. The price they paid for us.



## DEDICATED

TO THOSE WHO SUFFERED  
THAT WE MIGHT STILL  
BE FREE





## CONTENTS

---

		Page
<b>Introduction</b>		9
<b>Chapter I</b>	The Beginning of Things.....	11
<b>Chapter II</b>	For God and Country.....	15
<b>Chapter III</b>	At Bramshott Camp.....	21
<b>Chapter IV</b>	The Lights of London.....	27
<b>Chapter V</b>	Country Camps.....	41
<b>Chapter VI</b>	Here and There in France and Germany.....	53
<b>Chapter VII</b>	Hospitals and a Discharge Depot	61
<b>Chapter VIII</b>	Demobilization Camps.....	65
<b>Chapter IX</b>	Our London Office.....	69
<b>Chapter X</b>	Canada's Welcome Home.....	73
<b>Chapter XI</b>	The Work in Alberta.....	91
<b>Chapter XII</b>	Activities of Hospital Commit- tees.....	107
<b>Chapter XIII</b>	The Bonne Entente.....	141
<b>Chapter XIV</b>	Activities Among Foreign Forces.....	155
<b>Chapter XV</b>	Activities Among Permanent Forces.....	161
 <b>APPENDICES</b>		
<b>I</b>	"A Worker Adds Her Word".....	167
<b>II</b>	A Trip to Siberia.....	169
<b>III</b>	Comptroller's Office.....	171
<b>IV</b>	Overseas Chaplains.....	179
<b>V</b>	Financial Statements.....	181
<b>VI</b>	Investiture of Papal Honors and Banquet	189
 <b>ILLUSTRATIONS</b>		
<b>Plate I</b>	Lest we Forget.....	Face page 5
<b>Plate II</b>	Canadian Catholic Chap- lains, France.....	" " 11
<b>Plate III</b>	Major Rev. Dr. J. J. O'Gor- man, O.B.E.....	" " 16
<b>Plate IV</b>	Huts and Workers at Bex- hill, Bramshott, Witley	" " 22
<b>Plate V</b>	View of Huts in London..	" " 28
<b>Plate VI</b>	Group of Hut Interiors...	" " 42
<b>Plate VII</b>	K. of C. Huts in France...	" " 58
<b>Plate VIII</b>	Lt. Col. Rev. F. L. French, D.S.O.....	" " 60
<b>Plate IX</b>	Huts at Seaforth, Ripon and Buxton.....	" " 66

## CONTENTS—*Continued.*

### ILLUSTRATIONS—*Continued.*

Plate X	Huts at Quebec, Charlotte-town, Montreal, etc....	Face page	76
Plate XI	Huts at Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, London, etc..	" "	84
Plate XII	Huts at Brandon, Saskatoon and Winnipeg.....	" "	88
Plate XIII	Group of Scenes at Vancouver, Victoria and Revelstoke.....	" "	90
Plate XIV	Portrait Group: J. H. O'Connor, L. V. O'Connor, John J. Leddy J. P. Foley K.C. ....	" "	100
Plate XV	Portrait Group: Major Rev. John Knox, O.B.E. Capt. Rev. I. J. E. Daniel, Lt. Col. Rev. J. A. Fortier, M.C., Major Rev. Abbé Philippe Casgrain C.M.G.....	" "	112
Plate XVI	Portrait Group, Geo. Hanrahan, L. G. Jourdain, Dr. Wm. P. Broderick, Major Rev. Thos. McCarthy, M.C.....	" "	114
Plate XVII	The way K. of C. Huts were equipped.....	" "	122
Plate XVIII	Group of five scenes.....	" "	140
Plate XIX	Portrait Group: L.A. Giroux, J. D. O'Connell, W. T. Kernahan, Wm. Brennan	" "	152
Plate XX	Group of five Huts.....	" "	162
Plate XXI	Lt.-Col. Clarence F. Smith	" "	172
Plate XXII	Lt.-Col. Very Rev. Canon L. A. Sylvestre .....	" "	188
Plate XXIII	Joseph L. Murray.....	" "	196
Plate XXIV	Geo. H. Boivin, K.C., M.P.	" "	204
Chart	Hospital Donations.....	Back of Book	
Chart	Donations of Huts to Permanent Forces .....	" "	

# INTRODUCTION

• • •

*I*N this age of much book-making, we feel that most thinking people will agree with us that a fairly large percentage of the publishers' output represents an absolute waste of ink and paper. In giving to the public the following brief epitome of the War activities of the Canadian Knights of Columbus, we are vain enough to think that it will be classed among the worth-while works; for we believe that these pages enshrine a story of patriotic endeavor that is worthy of permanent record.

Great as is the Organization to which we have the honor to belong, were this story of the Catholic Army Huts merely a chapter in the growth and development of that Organization, we could not claim for it a universal appeal; but the War activities of the Canadian Knights demand and deserve a larger canvas.

For the first time in the history of our young nation, Catholic citizens of Canada, from Prince Edward Island to Victoria, worked together as a body; for the first time the Knights in Canada were afforded an opportunity of putting fully into practice their two-fold obligation to God and Country; for the first time they had a chance to come out before their Protestant fellow-citizens and give testimony that their oft-repeated protestations were not mere idle mouthings.

It has often been preferred against us that we are lacking in a sense of civic duty. With a full sense of the responsibility of the words that we use, we feel that we must admit that there was some ground for such an assertion. It is not for us to determine, here and now, how we were manœuvred into this position of seeming lack of interest; we content ourselves with recording that the fault was not entirely ours: there were many contributing causes.

Even under the stress of the Great War, the Catholics of Canada, loyal and patriotic though they were, did not immediately react to the great crisis as a united body. Leaders, both lay and clerical, proclaimed anew the ancient Catholic principle of Loyalty to Constituted Authority; but there was no cohesion, no united action. The Knights of Columbus sensed the danger in all this. They felt that in the years to come we would be denied much of the credit that was justly our due and, as Canadians first, they realized that no sacrifice was

*too great for the defence of liberty and that without some attempt at national cohesion, much of our well-meant (but ill-directed) efforts would be made in vain. Hence the organization of the Catholic Army Huts—the first attempt to unify Catholic endeavour all over our vast dominion.*

*The compiling of this volume is not to be understood as an attempt to glorify the Knights of Columbus at the expense of any other patriotic organization. We feel that there should be no jealousy in the rivalry of service to our common Country. No class or creed can justly claim a monopoly of Patriotism; whether we happen to be Catholics or Protestants, we are all Canadians—and it is as “Canadians first” that we dedicate to the Canadian people this summary of the part our Organization played in the Great War.*





*Canadian Catholic Chaplains' Meeting, Corps Headquarters, France.*



FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT—Capt. Rev. F. M. Lockhart, Capt. Rev. R. A. MacDonnell, M. C., Major Rev. T. M. McCarthy, M. C., Lt.-Col. Rev. F. L. French, D.S.D., Lt. Rev. M. Y. Fallon, Bishop of London, Ont., Major Rev. D. MacPherson, Major Rev. Miles Townsend, M.C., Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, O. B. E., Capt. Rev. H. E. Letang.

SECOND ROW—Cap. Rev. J. R. O'Gorman, Capt. Rev. F. P. White, Capt. Rev. W. L. Murray, M. C. and Rev. Capt. Rev. W. B. Carless, Capt. Rev. F. P. White, Capt. Rev. B. J. Murdoch, Capt. Rev. J. L. Bradley, Capt. Rev. A. H. Wood, Capt. Rev. M. J. Pickard.

THIRD ROW—Capt. Rev. M. D. Stirling, Capt. Rev. F. Hawks, Capt. Rev. G. A. Fallon, M.C., Capt. Rev. J. McDonald, M. C., Capt. Rev. P. McDonald, Capt. Rev. J. J. Deslauriers, Capt. Rev. M. Ginnis, Capt. Rev. J. F. Nicholson.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE BEGINNING OF THINGS.

**B**EFORE beginning to tell the story of the Catholic Army Huts, it will not be out of place to devote a few pages to the history of the Organization that made them possible, namely, the Knights of Columbus.

A few years ago it would have been much more necessary to go into detail as to the origin and development of this great fraternal order. The Knights had been grievously misrepresented. Unscrupulous persons, to win a little notoriety, or to enrich themselves at the expense of the credulous, professed to see in this powerful body a menace to national well-being; and so they dug deep into the refuse heap of Bigotry in an endeavour to discredit this Catholic organization by putting new legs under oft-exploded calumnies. The Knights were the bond slaves of the Pope, the tools of the Hierarchy, the sworn enemies of Protestantism, subject to Dual Allegiance, pledged to subvert the Constitution and to place the Supreme Pontiff in the chair of the State's Chief Magistrate. Were proof demanded, then it was forthcoming: the Bogus Oath was conclusive evidence.

It seems almost incredible that the purveyors of such absurdities could find an audience in this age of boasted enlightenment; but a fool is born every minute and there are always those who, for sordid self-interest, play on the prejudices of the ignorant. Despite the proud record of the Knights of Columbus, there were many who listened to the calumniators and not a few who believed.

But the day was fast approaching when these figments of disordered imaginations would be shown forth in all their naked baselessness. Civilization was reeling to its fall; men's souls were to be tried as though by fire and across the darkened firmament the Knights of Columbus were destined to blazon their true character in letters of gold, so that all might read and learn. The Great War did not change the aims and the ideals of the

Knights of Columbus, nor did it alter the calibre of the men who comprise this great brotherhood. It merely gave them a world-stage upon which to play their part "for God and Country." And the world knows how they played that part; the boys "Over There" knew it; they knew it when they came "Back Home" after the battle flags were furled; they know it to-day when, at every turn, they find the Knights' plan of re-establishment prepared to cope with all their needs and help pay back in part the debt a grateful country owes them. Their War Work placed the Knights of Columbus on the map and silenced their traducers for ever more.

One wonders if when, on April 6, 1882, the Reverend Michael J. McGivney took part in the first election of officers, he glimpsed the glorious future that Providence had mapped out for the new society!

Father McGivney was a man among men; of a far-seeing and constructive mind; alert to the needs of the present and sensed of the possibilities of the pregnant future. It was a hard task to which he had set his hand; others had attempted it and failed; but his vocabulary knew no such word as defeat. Resolved to meet the need that he knew existed for such an organization, he determined to put his whole soul into the work and leave the rest to Almighty God.

The need was obvious. Fraternal societies flourished throughout the United States. The advantages of membership in these societies, from a social and business viewpoint, were many; but the well-known ruling of the Church against membership in oath-bound organizations barred them to Catholics. Various attempts were made to organize a Catholic fraternal society that would meet with the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities and, at the same time, give its membership all the advantages enjoyed by the members of the proscribed organizations. But Mother Church, ever cautious, was slow to be convinced that all was well. Father McGivney had been connected with some of these attempts, and gradually

from the ashes of apparent defeat he evolved a new spark that was to prove a beacon light to Catholic lay endeavour. He made up his mind that it was possible to create a society that could be secret and yet not oath-bound. Aided by a few sincere Catholic laymen, he worked out his scheme, making sure of his every step until, on the date above mentioned, he had the happiness of seeing the first Council of the Order duly established in New Haven, Conn. The names of the officers of this first Council were: President, James T. Mullen; Vice-President, John T. Kerrigan; Corresponding Secretary, Rev. M. J. McGivney; Recording Secretary, William H. Sellwood; Financial Secretary, James T. McMahon; Treasurer, Michael Curran; Advocate, C. T. Driscoll; Medical Examiner, M. C. O'Connor, M.D., Chaplain Rev. P. P. Lawlor; Lecturer, Daniel Colwell, and Warden, John F. Moore.

The new society had obtained the sanction of the ecclesiastical authorities; a system of fraternal insurance was devised and the society incorporated.

The fact that the society had obtained the approval of the Church was proof positive that it was not oath-bound; so that the Bogus Oath must indeed be bogus, seeing that there is no oath of any kind. It is secret only in the sense that its ritual is secret upon promise of man to man, which promise must ever yield to the authority of Church and of State.

The watchword of the Order is "Good Citizenship." Acting on the universal principle that good citizenship is based on morality, it demands practical Catholicity of all its members. Its strictly denominational character implies no menace to the rights of those beyond the pale of the Church. In defending the rights of Catholics, it seeks not to curtail the rights of any individual or group of citizens. It is not a narrowly national American body, since there are nearly fifty thousand Knights in Canada and a considerable number in other countries. It is, therefore, an international fraternal society, preach-

ing everywhere its gospel of good citizenship by counsellng and exemplifying loyalty to the Constitution and laws of the countries in which it is established.

The first Canadian Council was opened in Montreal in 1897. A number of Montrealers—including Messrs. John P. Kavanagh, Clarence F. Smith, W. J. Crowe, M. H. O'Connor, T. F. Moore, who had joined the Order at an initiation held in Plattsburg, N.Y., thought it would be an excellent thing to organize a Council in the great Canadian metropolis. Accordingly an application was made to New Haven for a Charter, with the result that Canada Council No. 284 was established on November 25th of the above year, with twenty-three insurance and twenty-five associate members. The society "caught on;" other Councils were rapidly formed, until to-day every Province of the Dominion is represented in the one hundred and thirty-eight Canadian Councils.

## CHAPTER TWO FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

THE Knights of Columbus had been established in Canada for seventeen years before the tocsin of war broke upon a startled world in the balmy summer days of 1914. During those years they had made a beginning of things "for God and Country," impressing alike cleric and layman, Protestant and Catholic, with the excellence of their aims and objects. It is true, indeed, that they had their initial difficulties. Some noisy apologists of Protestantism professed to be alarmed at their growth and activities, and even some within the fold looked askance at their ambitious projects; but as one good work after another was fostered by them, the timorous ones were won over; and then the Great War afforded them the opportunity of demonstrating to their fellow citizens of other faiths that they had nothing to fear from this organized body of Catholic men. If for no other reason than this, that it afforded proof positive of the loyalty of the leading Catholic lay organization in the Dominion, the work of the Catholic Army Huts marks an epoch in the history of Catholic lay endeavour in Canada.

From the very beginning, members of the Knights of Columbus answered the call to the colours and as the Expeditionary Forces flowed overseas, it was but natural that the thoughts of those Knights who, for one reason or another, could not don the khaki should turn to those members of the Order who were showing forth its teachings in practice on the blood-stained fields of France and Flanders; but the War dragged on and no concerted action was taken; the Knights had never tried their strength and there was no little hesitancy in attempting anything of an ambitious nature; until early in 1917 a tangible opportunity of trying their mettle presented itself in the form of an appeal to the Ontario State Deputy, Mr. J. L. Murray, from Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., an overseas chaplain who was

convalescing in Canada from wounds received on the battlefield. Thus to Major O'Gorman belongs the credit of initiating the work of the Catholic Army Huts.

The scheme of ministering to the spiritual and material wants of the thousands of Catholics serving with the colours was presented by State Deputy Murray to the Ontario Knights of Columbus at their annual Convention in Hamilton, May 8, 1917. The Convention enthusiastically supported the plan and a per capita tax of \$1.00 per member was immediately levied.

Since it was quite evident that this levy would not meet the necessities of the case, the State Deputy communicated with the Hierarchy of Ontario with a view to securing their support for a province-wide appeal for financial assistance for the great work thus launched. As was to be expected, the Bishops warmly approved of the project and, encouraged by their hearty co-operation, the Ontario Knights of Columbus organized a Drive, which resulted in the magnificent amount of \$80,000.00 being realized.

Meanwhile, the organization of the Catholic Chaplain Service overseas was being perfected and the funds voted them were being handled in a most satisfactory and economical manner. As the magnitude of the work to be accomplished became more and more apparent, it was felt that incorporation should be secured. As the Knights individually and through their established organizations were and would continue to be the main avenue for the collection of funds, it was decided that the incorporated body should consist of representatives of the Chaplain Service and of the Knights. This was, taking all the circumstances into account, an ideal arrangement. At this time the Canadian National Executive of the K. of C. had not been established: the Knights of Columbus had received no official recognition as a war and patriotic agency from the Canadian Government and, finally, there was in existence a hard-fought-for and well-manned association overseas in the Chaplain Service itself and



Major Rev. Dr. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., Ottawa, Ont., originator and organizer of and one of the Incorporators of the Knights of Columbus "Catholic Army Huts Association" and director of same 1917-18-19-20.  
Overseas Secretary-Treasurer 1917-18.  
Senior Catholic Chaplain G.H.Q. France, 1919.



## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

it would have been a waste of time and energy to set about creating another organization to do work that could be done more efficiently by the Chaplain Service. Thus it was that the supplying of the sinews of war, so to speak, was allotted to the Knights in Canada, whilst the overseas activities were assigned to the Chaplain Service.

Accordingly, Mr. J. L. Murray, State Deputy of Ontario, and Mr. G. H. Boivin, M.P., State Deputy of Quebec, representing the two leading Canadian jurisdictions of the Knights of Columbus, and Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., applied to the Canadian Government for Letters Patent incorporating the "Catholic Army Huts," a body corporate and politic with rights and powers to erect, equip and conduct Catholic Army Huts for Canadian Soldiers, which were to serve the two-fold purpose of chapels for Catholic soldiers and recreation huts for all soldiers, irrespective of creed.

The Letters Patent applied for were issued October 20, 1917 and the provisional Board of Directors consisted of: Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., of the City of Ottawa; Capt. Rev. C. D. O'Gorman of the town of Eganville; Capt. Rev. Joseph Jules Desjardins of the city of Ottawa; Joseph Lawrence Murray, of the town of Renfrew—all in the province of Ontario; with George Henri Boivin, M.P., of the City of Granby, in the province of Quebec. All Canadian Catholic Chaplains were considered members of the corporation.

The Letters Patent appointed Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, Mr. J. L. Murray and Mr. G. H. Boivin, Provisional Directors, with authority to elect at their first meeting four other directors. This was done at a meeting held on November 5, 1917, when the following four chaplains were added to the Board: Lt.-Col. W. T. Workman, M.C., Headquarters Staff, London, England; Lt.-Col. F. L. French, D.S.O., Canadian Corps Headquarters, France; Major Abbé Casgrain, War Office, London, England; Major Rev. John Knox, Senior Catholic Chaplain, Bramshott Camp, England. The Chaplain Direc-

tors were appointed a Committee to manage the affairs of the Corporation in England and France, and Mr. J. L. Murray, Secretary-Treasurer for Canada. The first general meeting of the Corporation was held in Ottawa, January, 1918, when the same Board of Directors was appointed for the current year. Encouraged by the success already attained, it was decided at this meeting to further expand the work by the formation of a special Knights of Columbus War Committee composed of representatives from every province of the Dominion. Suggestions along this line were laid before a meeting of all the Canadian State Deputies held in the Waldorf-Astoria, New York City, August 14, 1918, at which there were present: Major Rev. Canon Sylvestre, A. D. C. S., Ottawa; J. L. Murray, Renfrew, State Deputy Knights of Columbus, Ontario; L. V. O'Connor, Lindsay, Ontario; Thos. N. Phelan, Toronto, Ontario; Jas. E. Day, Toronto, Ontario; R. A. Jeffrey, Arnprior, Ontario; Dr. W. P. Broderick, St. John, N.B., State Deputy, K. of C., for Maritime Provinces; W. J. McMillan, Charlottetown, P.E.I., Geo. H. Boivin, M.P., Granby, Quebec, State Deputy K. of C., Quebec; Dr. Damien Masson, Montreal, Que.; J. J. Leddy, Saskatoon, Sask., State Deputy K. of C., Manitoba and Saskatchewan; J. J. Callahan, Winnipeg, Man.; L. A. Giroux, Edmonton, Alta., State Deputy K. of C., Alberta; F. Kenny, Lethbridge, Alta.; J. D. O'Connell, Victoria, B.C., State Deputy K. of C., British Columbia; J. I. Keary, Vancouver, B.C.; Dr. N. A. Dussault, Quebec, Que., Supreme Director K. of C. for Canada.

It was decided at this meeting to have a Canadian-wide drive, the objective being placed at \$500,000.00. It was also decided to take the necessary steps to secure supplementary Letters Patent enlarging the directorate of the Catholic Army Huts Corporation, so that all the Canadian jurisdictions would be represented on the Board.

The All-Canada Drive was launched during the third week of September, 1918. The entire country was thor-

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

oughly organized through the various Councils of the Order and the widest publicity given to the Catholic Army Huts and its objects. The support of the whole Canadian Hierarchy was a big factor; the press, both Catholic and secular, co-operated most generously; public meetings were held in every important centre; kindred bodies to the C. A. H. lent their influence to the appeal and, last but not least, hundreds of leading Protestants all over the Dominion volunteered their services in various capacities.

The Canadian people responded nobly. Organizations and individuals, regardless of religious or other differences, came forward with handsome donations for the benefit of the troops. Thousands of members of the Knights of Columbus were employed in the work of actually bringing in the money, working in teams, whose captains in their turn were responsible to district chairmen. These teams were oftentimes supported by groups of canvassers who were neither members of the Order nor, in some instances, of the Catholic Church. It was all for the soldiers and sailors and everybody lent a hand. In the end the handsome sum of \$1,250,352.09 was realized.

The result of the Campaign was a great vote of confidence in the Knights of Columbus. That this implicit trust was not misplaced, the history of the Catholic Army Huts establishes beyond all question. The Huts, as we have already noted, were established as religious centres for the Catholic soldiers and as recreation centres for soldiers of all denominations. From their very inception they welcomed soldiers, sailors and airmen of all nationalities and creeds and from that day until the last Hut closed its doors, no man, either overseas or in Canada, was ever questioned as to his religious belief. The great fraternity of "those who served" was the only test necessary for admission to the C. A. H.

The work of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts during and after the European War was the practical

*Canadian Knights of Columbus*

---

interpretation of the teachings of the Order. The history of this work, whether recorded on the printed page, or—and better so—in the grateful memories of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and sailors, has become part of the history of the Dominion. Not in any boastful spirit, but in righteous satisfaction at having made a genuine effort to be of service to those who fought for their country, the following chapters are given to the public.

## CHAPTER THREE AT BRAMSHOTT CAMP.

THAT—to use the stereotyped phrase—the War Work of the Knights of Columbus “filled a long-felt want” is well illustrated by the condition of affairs that obtained overseas before and after the advent of the C. A. H. Previous to their advent Catholic soldiers were in the rather humiliating position of being without any accommodation for the proper celebration of Mass and the practice of their religion other than that placed at their disposal by other organizations. Although permission was readily granted, yet it is quite evident that many a padre and many a Catholic soldier must have felt that they were, because of those circumstances, placed in a position of inferiority to other institutions and religious bodies. It is not in the nature of man to be beholden to another for something he feels he himself should possess. This, then, was the initial achievement of the C. A. H.: they made the Catholic Tommy feel as good as his Protestant comrade.

Bramshott Camp, which saw the beginning of C. A. H. work in England, bears this out. The Canadian troops who arrived in numbers in the Spring of 1916 found various institutions at work for their recreational benefit. Catholics alone were unprovided with any institution bearing the name of their Church and were obliged to worship for several months in the dingy unswept premises of a Cinema Theatre which was the property of a private firm. Later, Mass was celebrated in three Battalion Mess Rooms. The small “Camp Chapel” was requisitioned for early Mass and the communicants got their breakfast through the good offices of a genial old lady at the near-by Methodist Hut. When the English weather permitted (which happened occasionally) Mass was celebrated in the open air. The Chaplains, billeted in officers’ quarters and sometimes sharing a room with other officers, had no means of keeping in touch with

the troops. In these circumstances the Sisters of the Cenacle Convent in the neighbouring hamlet of Grayshott were approached by the Chaplains and asked to extend hospitality to the men. In response to this appeal they generously opened their Convent Chapel and grounds to the troops on Sunday afternoons. A collection, made by them among visitors and friends, defrayed some of the expenses of the free tea and cake which were supplied on some occasions to hundreds of men.

Such was the state of affairs when, after the departure of the 4th Division to France in August, 1916, a new Catholic Chaplain came upon the scene. Shortly before his arrival the religious and social needs of the camp had been investigated by the Senior Catholic Chaplain of the British Aldershot Command and, on his energetic representations, the Catholic Huts Council of England backed the construction of a Catholic Chapel and Recreation Hut. The Recreation Hut opened its doors in March, 1916, and the Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul, completely separated from it, was finished by July. The Catholic Women's League took charge of the canteens and began a career of service which will be gratefully remembered by the sons of Canada who passed through the camp from that time until demobilization in 1919.

Some days later a Canadian Chaplain wrote home to Canada: "Last Saturday Bishop Cotter of Portsmouth opened a splendid C. W. L. Hut for our men at Bramshott. It is a godsend for us—a home from home—it cost over £500."

Besides the encouragement and support of Bishop Cotter, who was at all times a good friend to the Canadian forces, much help was received from Canadian Headquarters and also from the Imperial Engineers. The military authorities provided a transport for all building materials and gave great help in handling supplies throughout the history of the Hut.

As the time went on it was felt to be out of the question that the Catholics of Canada, who are richer and more



1. Lady workers at K. of C. Hut, Bexhill, England.
2. Interior of K. of C. Hut at Bramshott, England.
3. Exterior of K. of C. Hut at Witley, England.
4. K. of C. Entertainers at Hut, Bexhill, England.
5. Scene outside K. of C. Hut, Bexhill, England.



## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

numerous than those of England, should depend upon an English society and English money for the erection of Canadian Huts. The overseas Directors of the new "Catholic Army Huts Fund" therefore gave early attention to Bramshott Camp. The English society which, with the contributions from soldiers built the chapel, was reimbursed by the C. A. H. The Recreation Hut (116 feet by 16 feet wide) was subsequently improved by the addition of a kitchen, store room, double billiard-room and workers' apartments at the expense of the C. A. H. Its Catholic Women's league staff by their distinctive canteen methods, made the recreational and social side of the work known throughout the camp. The "combine" thus happily inaugurated was felicitously described by one of the C.W.L. ladies as that of "Capital and Labour." The partnership was a wonderful asset to our work. In 1918 the Secretary of the C. W. L. Huts Committee, offering to share new responsibilities, wrote: "It is always a pleasure to work with or for the Canadian K. of C." Meanwhile the Chapel also enjoyed the continued presence of a zealous chaplain and became a spiritual home to thousands of soldiers who found in it the familiar atmosphere of Catholic piety and every convenience for the fulfilment of religious duties. The Senior Catholic Chaplain reported to the Bishops in Canada in 1918 that "this camp is a model one as far as Catholic life is concerned and has proved that, given the right priest and the proper facilities, the normal life of a Catholic parish can be maintained even in a military camp."

The advantage of having a separate Chapel was much appreciated as, outside of the Sunday Parade Masses which for reasons of space were held in the Hut, no religious services were held outside of the Chapel. Thus the Bramshott Camp fulfilled in letter and spirit the Constitution of Catholic Army Huts.

That this broad spirit of universal service was appreciated by the soldiers is evident from the fact that the

Hut was invariably crowded and did yeoman service until the last Canadians left the camp.

The present compiler, who knew the camp in its "heroic" days, had the privilege of visiting it during the height of the C. A. H. work. After preaching, in English and in French, to Catholic soldiers in the Chapel, it was a pleasure to step into the adjoining Recreation Hut and find all classes mingled in happy social intercourse. In the beginning of the C. A. H. work there was a certain amount of diffidence on the part of non-Catholics. A Catholic soldier recounts that a non-Catholic stopped him at the entrance to one of our Huts with the query, "What do you have to do when you go in there?" The Catholic asked, "What do you want there?" "Shoe polish," replied the non-Catholic; "All right then, go ahead in, stand up at the counter and shout out 'Shoe-polish please.' " The method proved successful, and the neophyte shyly told his informant that he expected some kind of password or formula of faith would have been expected from him. That the C. A. H. during its period of activity destroyed many strange misconceptions as to the social charity of Catholics is surely one of its proudest achievements. The Chaplain in charge at that time writes: "The situation was very soon understood and appreciated by 'our boys.' From the point of view of recreation and hospitality (to all), I might mention that in Christmas 1917-1918 and 1918-1919 the ladies provided the men with free Christmas fare and entertainment. On the latter occasion there was a Christmas tree that will not be soon forgotten by those who were there." In 1918 the presence of the 10th French-Canadian Reserve Battalion called for an extension of activities. Experienced French-speaking Chaplains obtained a large cinema tent and this, equipped with a complete cinema outfit and frequent change of films, proved a tremendous success. To regulate the crowd clamouring for admission, a nominal entrance fee of one penny (two

cents) was charged; but here as elsewhere all tendency to commercialize was absent.

Later, a K. of C. Hut of the usual model was presented to the Reserve and served as Library, Reading Room, Study Room and Chapel. About 700 volumes of good French literature were provided and about 25 volumes exchanged each day.

The following extract from a letter of thanks written to the Overseas Directors by the Colonel of the Reserves will show that these benefits were well appreciated: "You have been so good to us already that I am a bit afraid to ask for more and I want to take this opportunity of thanking you once more for what you have done for us in the past. After supplying a great many of the books for our Battalion Library, you have also given us a quantity of chairs for this Library. Later, when you saw that the quarters in which we were giving Moving Pictures to the men were too small and far from comfortable, you came forward and provided us with a hut tent costing about £600. Not satisfied with this, you later made it possible for us to manufacture our own power for the cinema by giving us a generator at a cost of about £200 and you have now expressed your willingness to consider the advisability of supplying new quarters for our Library and our cinema at a cost of £1155 and £2800 respectively. One has to be here to know what this means for the men and I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently."

Towards the end of the existence of this Hut the Chaplain who had done so much for its formation and continuation was succeeded by a more recent arrival from Canada, who thanked the Directors as follows: "The religious articles so kindly sent us were distributed yesterday. Fortunately, also, the fine consignment of gum arrived opportunely for an Easter distribution. The boys can scarcely understand how they receive both cigarettes and gum gratis. The expression so often heard of the 'Player's' and now of 'Wrigley's' is, 'Why, it's the real

Canadian stuff.' The C. A. H. is giving great satisfaction, except in the last instance there has been considerable chewing."

It should here be mentioned that the "gum" distributed gratis was presented to the C. A. H. by the Canadian Red Cross Society who, in this and several other instances, were kind enough to co-operate in our war work.

In conclusion, we may say with pride that the "outfit" at Bramshott showed forth the K. of C. ideal in all particulars. The most complete harmony and success obtained throughout its existence and we are satisfied that every soldier who came into touch with it will endorse all we have said.

The Chaplain mainly responsible for the little settlement which, according to a report of the Directors, "may be said to have originated the C. A. H. idea," says in a letter to the compiler: "If I were to try and outline the response from our men, it would seem like an exaggeration. Suffice it to say that this response was generous and a never-ending source of consolation to the Chaplains and workers at the Hut."

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE LIGHTS OF LONDON.

**F**ROM the first days of war, the huge conglomeration of towns and cities which is called "London" became a very maelstrom of attraction to the soldier on leave. The many-sidedness of its appeal to men of all types and the fact that "all railroads lead to London" made it inevitable that its streets should be over-run with the sons of Canada, side by side with their comrades-in-arms from other countries.

In the train and on the track of these splendid but often unsophisticated scions of a simpler life, came the ramifications of social evils in their most hideous forms. The temptation to "let things go" and "to have a good time" was very strong. The unscrupulous underworld of vice organized itself for a rich harvest. Against these nefarious influences the various churches and philanthropies threw in the quota of their efforts. To the everlasting credit of the Catholic Women's League of England, an excellent Hostel was opened in the early days of the War near the great Cathedral of Westminster and proved, to Canadians as to men of other countries, a homelike centre while on leave. The Canadian Chaplain Service had for some time seen the necessity of posting a Catholic Chaplain to the London Area; but it was not found possible to do this until the Fall of 1917. The arrival of a Chaplain for this new field of work coincided with the welcome news that the Knights of Columbus had organized a successful Drive for funds. A tiny house, invaluable through its proximity to the C. W. L. Hut and Victoria Station, was at once secured and two-thirds of the rent provided through the new Catholic Army Huts Association. From the moment of its acquisition a social work of increasing importance was done. The Chaplain posted there was able to be "out and about" at all hours and in all kinds of places to find out Canadians

on leave, to rescue them from the very jaws of evil, and to keep them within the bounds of law and order.

By Christmas, 1917, the little house in Greencoat Place had become known to many Canadians on leave. A writer in the "Catholic Register" (Jan. 24, 1918) describes the welcome given to many Canadians in the C.W.L. Hut on Christmas Night and notes that while "many found excellent accommodation at the Hut or in its neighbourhood, an overflow of nine found a shakedown in the tiny office which is occupied by the Canadian Chaplain since the organization of the C. A. H. Fund." In terminating his appreciation the writer says: "Canadian Catholics who have contributed to the Knights of Columbus Fund for Catholic Army Huts will be glad to know that Father.....'s permanent residence in London is now made possible by their generosity. His arduous work, religious and social, is of increasing importance and is being provided for by the Overseas Directors." We may add that, while the interests of Catholics were then and always kept in view, there was no tendency at any time, either in the C. W. L. Hut or the Catholic Army Clubs, to discriminate between Catholics and non-Catholics. The notice, "All Soldiers Welcome," was conscientiously lived up to and while Catholics appreciated the spiritual opportunities offered, non-Catholics appreciated the fact that no attempt was made to attach religious propaganda to meals, concerts, or social entertainment. One soldier remarked to a comrade with deep appreciation—"Those are fine Huts—they don't hand you a tract with a d——d cup of tea."

The movement, thus formed in embryo, came to its fulfilment in the spring of 1918 when, after many fruitless attempts to secure a central and suitable location, the Overseas Directors were able to get possession of a fine old mansion situated at No. 24 Grosvenor Place, near Hyde Park Corner and within a few minutes' walk of Victoria Station. The work of adapting the house and its furniture to its needs was proceeded with and early



1. Exterior of a K. of C. Hut, London, England.

2. 3. 4. 5. Interior views of some of the K. of C. Huts, in London, England.



in May, 1918, it was informally opened and immediately well filled. On May 21st the formal opening and blessing of the premises was conducted by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, who was (says Miss Anne Merrill of the "Toronto Sunday World") "picturesque in his robes of office.... standing between Sir Edward Kemp and Sir George Perley." Other notable persons present were Lieut. Gen. Sir R. E. Turner from Canadian Headquarters, Argyll House; Dr. Pelletier, Agent General for Quebec; Col. John T. Ryan, the first Knight of Columbus in Toronto; Col. Valentine Matthews, London Inspector of Rest Houses; Brigadier Gen. Bishop Keatinge, Senior British Chaplain; Col. Father Delouche, Senior Belgian Chaplain, and Lt. Col. Father Workman, Senior Canadian Chaplain. The ladies of the Catholic Women's League, who were associated with the C. A. H. in the running of the Club, provided refreshments after speeches from the Cardinal and other distinguished guests.

The same Canadian reporter writes as follows: "The C. A. C. is established in very delightful premises—one of the fine old residences of London opposite Buckingham Palace" and notes "the comfortable lounge where soldiers could luxuriate, its billiard tables, pianola, card tables, cozy library, spotless dormitory, most useful baths, quaint little Chapel (cleanliness next to godliness) and away at the rear, removed from the insistent sounds of the busy street, the Chaplain's room looking out on to a walled garden."

The Club thus auspiciously launched went ahead "full swing." Mingled with the Canadian boys, attracted by the electric "C. A. H. Maple Leaf" sign over its entrance, came many Americans drawn thither by the friendly union of the Stars and Stripes with the Canadian and British flags hanging from its verandah. All had heard of the Knights of Columbus drives for funds in the States and Canada, and many prominent American Knights of Columbus came in to congratulate the Canadian C. A. H. on being the first in the London area. Among these

first appreciative visitors were Mr. Walter Kernan, American Commissioner and Chaplain Monsignor Connolly of the American Army.

Inside of a few weeks it became evident that the clientèle would be more numerous than one house could accommodate and additional premises were secured a few doors away at No. 30 Grosvenor Place. The original Club was then equipped with additional beds and provided with a private Oratory. The Canteen and Recreation facilities were transferred to No. 30 and the sleeping accommodation increased to a total of 127, excluding the resident staff.

Some weeks later the American Knights of Columbus Commissioners turned their attention to the Victoria District and decided to build an addition to the C. W. L. Hut which, like the C. A. C., gave much hospitality to Americans. This project, owing to the climax of the war, never got further than the laying of a foundation stone, the Commissioners having decided in the meantime to open much needed clubs in the Edgeware Road and High Holborn. Thus the C. A. C. continued to render good service to the American Forces whose Army and Navy Headquarters were near by. Men on the staff were permanent visitors at the Club and many bands of recruits for the U. S. Army took their first meals at the Canadian C. A. H. So much were the two branches of the Knights of Columbus identical in the popular mind, that a writer to the American Press, calling attention to the activities of the American Commissioners, notes that "in connection with the same religious work the Catholic Army Club has its colors flying outside of the old mansion at No. 30 Grosvenor Place. This," he says, "is a most necessary club for soldiers in the centre of the District of Columbia and the lunch room at noon is a great convenience to our Staff—from the near-by G. H. Q. of both Army and Navy."

Meanwhile through the efforts of the Canadian Chaplains in England and France and the recommendations

of the troops who had experienced its hospitality, the Club was well advertised and the Resident Chaplain, not content with those who came in spontaneously, went out each day to meet trains and to scour the streets for Canadians who were often brought in penniless and despondent to its cheerful atmosphere.

Through the devoted services of a staff which became more and more cohesive and effective as time went on, the Club became quickly renowned for its cleanliness, its fine appointments and its varied "bill of fare." Prompt and cheerful service was assured by the permanent staff, aided by the voluntary lady workers of the C. W. L. and, in the earlier days conspicuously by the excellent association known as the "Women's Voluntary Service Corps." During the greater part of its existence its doors were ever open, and its kitchens provided a twenty-four hour service from the "vasty depths" of a London basement.

Of all the Clubs and Huts worked by the C. A. H. this was naturally the most interesting and important. Its slogan, "All Soldiers and Sailors Welcome," brought to its portals men of all religions, of all nationalities and of all temperaments. Complete harmony reigned within its doors—Colonial fraternized with Imperial and Catholic with Protestant—and no serious disturbances occurred throughout the course of its history.

Aristocratic neighbours were agreeably astonished to find that the Club and its visitors did little to disturb the serene respectability of Grosvenor Place. Though situated so near to the tumult of the Victoria terminus, it was free from all annoyance, surrounded by the peaceful mansions of plutocracy and overlooked the leafy gardens of Buckingham Palace.

It should be noted that the near-by soldiers' Clubs were quick to recognize this valuable addition to the soldiers' accommodation of London. The Y. M. C. A., the Church Army and the excellent "Maple Leaf" Clubs were in frequent touch with its staff for interchange of service and the experienced Inspector of London Rest

Houses, Col. Valentine Matthews, often visited the Club and was delighted with its high standard of service.

During the period of demobilization the Club continued to be most useful. When the number of men "on leave" decreased, the Annex at No. 24 was dismantled and, at the end of June, 1919, the main premises closed their doors, to the great regret of surviving "Headquarters men" who had come to look upon the Club as a true home. For the cheerful "atmosphere" that prevailed, for the excellent service that was given and for the smooth running of the whole, the C. A. H. is indebted, on behalf of the Canadian people, to the Chaplains in charge who gave themselves without stint, to the Catholic Women's League, to the orderlies provided by the Canadian Government and to all employees, who from the joyous Manageress with her magnetic personality down to the humblest bed worker, vied in cheerful service to the troops.

The great success of the two "Full Houses" in Grosvenor Place led the Overseas Directors to consider the possibility of further extension in the London area. Fruitless attempts were made in the Fall of 1918 to find a suitable location in or near the Strand. In consequence of these difficulties and in view of the fact that the Waterloo terminus, which was the place of arrival in London from the important camps of Bramshott and Witley, was less well provided with Hut accommodation, the Directors turned their attention to that crowded and somewhat noisesome district. The only building available in the neighbourhood was a large structure known as St. George's Hall, which was the property of a Catholic Club attached to the Southwark Cathedral Parish. The use of this building was rented to the Directors by its owners and the work of adaptation put in hand. The necessary alterations were more difficult to overcome than they appeared at first and the new Club, situated on a strategic corner near St. George's Circus, was opened at Christmastime by Sir Robert Borden, P.C., Prime Minister of Canada, in the presence of the Hon. C. J.

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

Doherty, Lady Drummond, the G. O. C. London District and other distinguished guests.

It then offered accommodation in accordance with the standard of the C. A. H. and the C. W. L., both justly proud of their reputation in partnership. Situated as it was in a rough and grimy district, the cheerful interior, from the spacious Canteen with its abundant "eats" to the Recreation Rooms with their busy billiard tables, and the spotless dormitory with its long rows of clean and cosy beds, was a revelation of service to those who entered its bright and cheery portals from the dark and dingy street outside. The intense usefulness of this new venture was soon brought to an end, however, by the rapid progress of demobilization. On the 12th of June, Major General Fielding, commanding the London District, wrote the following letter of thanks to the Overseas Directors:

HEADQUARTERS, LONDON DISTRICT  
*Horse Guards Annex,  
Carlton House Terrace, S.W.I.,*  
12TH JUNE, 1919.

*I should be very much obliged if you would convey my best thanks on behalf of the Soldiers who have used the Catholic Army Club, St. George's Hall, to Miss Stourton, Miss Latham and all the workers at the Club for the good and hard work they have done during the six months the Club has been in existence. It has been a great benefit to the soldiers and you all have reason to feel proud of the record of the Club, which has been very much appreciated by many hundreds of soldiers.*

*Yours very truly,  
SGD. G. P. T. FIELDING,  
MAJOR GENERAL,  
Commanding London District.*

Those who had the difficult problem of London accommodation in hand at a time of uncertainty and difficulty were amply repaid for their energy and readiness to serve the C. A. H. and the Canadian public, realizing that the K. of C. institutions in London, if not first in

the field, were at least entirely efficient and exceedingly well patronized during each day of their existence.

In spite of the great difficulties experienced in opening and running these Huts without the military "establishment" enjoyed by other societies, a successful result was obtained and no word of adverse criticism ever reached the Directors. Thus the London Clubs closed their doors, happy in the consciousness of thorough service and of much gratitude deserved and obtained.

The immense benefits resulting from the establishment of a really high-class Catholic Army Club in the neighborhood of London's chief military terminus may be gauged, to some extent, by a glance at the well-worn "Visitors' Book" which was, for many months, on a table in the Recreation Room at No. 24 Grosvenor Place. It is worthy of note that while the cover of the volume asked for "Suggestions, Appreciations and Complaints," there are in its varied contents but few suggestions and "No Complaints."

A Canadian "Scotty" from the West writes on its opening page:

*"We have a saying back home 'Gee, it's great to meet a friend from your own home town,' and the sentiment and hope so expressed, in its broader sense, is most likely to be fulfilled by a sojourn at the Catholic Army Club. For here you will meet with 'fellers' from your own country, province, or mayhap from your home town whom common sympathies and interests have drawn together in a strange land and where the atmosphere of geniality and welcome will warm the heart and make it indeed seem a home from home. May every success and prosperity attend this Club and the workers who so unselfishly labor to make our sojourn in London a source of lasting pleasure when we recall it in future days."*

Six Americans follow with an expression of thanks to the "Chaplain," "The good ladies," and we might add, "The pretty young ladies" of the Club.

From the hundreds of appreciations which follow, we cull the following typical extracts: A Canadian of the 75th Batt. decides that "it is a jake place" and hopes the troops may "find it out quickly," while a member of

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

the French-Canadian Young Men's Association (A.C.J.C.) considered it henceforth his duty to do "all in his power" to inform his comrades of the welcome awaiting them. A cautious American decides that the Club "looks like an honest effort to help the soldier and the sailor." A very youthful Canadian, "broke" and rescued with reluctant modesty from the Strand on a wet Saturday night, gratefully writes:

*"In my case I've been used as only a Mother could use her son, and dare say all others are treated in like manner, no matter what rank, nationality, or creed you belong to."*

He terminates by telling his comrades, "If you can boost the C. A. H., go the limit." One of his companions, "A Yankee Canuck," is gratefully reminiscent of the Sunday Mass provided in the House Chapel.

After these tributes from Overseas, an English Army Service Corps man, belonging to a detachment situated near the Club, states that the Club is "equally as welcome to our own lads here—far from their homes in England," and thinks that "through the kindness of the ladies and the sociability that exists it has been the means of keeping his companions "from the walls of a public house." He terminates: "We are not strangers in the true sense of the word, but brothers from far and near helping in a just cause for God" and adds a prayer that God may "look with favor on all that is carried out here."

Swelling the circle of appreciation, an American sailor writes: "This is a home and none are strangers here." An Anzac writes underneath: "The above just expresses my sentiments and views as well." A home-loving Canadian says: "The Club makes me think of my little Grey Home in the West," while a companion adds that it is "the next best thing to a trip home—which is saying much." Most of the entries refer indeed to the homelike character of the Club and its resemblance to the "real home" far away. One Canadian says: "When I write to mother on the excellent paper supplied free, she will know that her boy in khaki is being well looked after both spiritually and physically."

An American K. of C. writes: "I am glad to have found a Catholic Club at last—I shall make much use of it." In connection with this appreciation it should be remembered that the Grosvenor Place Club was the first and, for a long time, the only K. of C. Club in London. It was therefore much patronized by the American boys, as many of these extracts amply show.

Among many French-Canadians grateful to a Club which they patronized well and which always had a warm welcome for the hardy sons of Quebec, a 58th Batt. man writes that the Club is "the best place that a soldier could find." A New Zealander appreciates "a splendid institution, strongly recommended to Maorilanders by Chaplain Captain Skinner." Four Canadians—three Irish and one French—"here certify that the C. A. C. is the only place to stop at while in London." One French-Canadian finds it "un vrai chez-nous;" another thanks the Chaplain "for all the trouble he has taken on our account," and a third assures us "the sorrow I experience in leaving is not to leave the city, but to leave the C. A. C. which one could say has not its equal."

A grateful American inscribes his "good wishes to Father —and his co-workers for the splendid work they are doing for us boys from across the seas." He further explains "by us boys I mean all of the boys of the States and Canada," and hopes that the Chaplain "with the help of our Divine Saviour will be able to carry on this work till we finish our work." No extract could better illustrate the fraternal spirit which pervaded the Club throughout its existence.

A disciple of Captain Bairnsfather says sapiently: "If you know of a better 'ole go to it, but I assure you the C. A. C. is a good 'ole." A French-Canadian sees in the working of the Club "devotedness carried to a very high degree," and a compatriot gives it the acme of his praise by finding in its working "a truly French-Canadian hospitality and amiability."

A Limerick chap avers that "In the Desert, in the Forest

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

and the Plain you will never feel alone if you follow the advice of the R. C. Clergy," and calls down God's blessing on the staff "for their efforts to make us happy." A writer "on behalf of American boys in the British Army" expresses the thanks of his companions in loneliness. A peacefully disposed Canadian finds the Club "the nicest place. I never spent such a quiet vacation while in this country", and a "real home." An American sailor states that "the real pleasure" of his stay in London has been "to visit and talk with the Chaplain." A Canadian laddie from Winnipeg, orphaned through the war and discharged from the Army at 16 with "no friends in the world," found at the Club a welcome and, through the Chaplain, a job.

"Old Joe" thinks there are not enough C. A. Huts. They are just the last word to make the boys comfy.

An American youth bears witness that "to some the Club has been home, to others a place where an evening can be spent in homelike surroundings." A French-Canadian "back from France and Germany" appreciates the "bonne maman" who manages the Club so well that he has "never seen anything out of its place" during his stay. A proud K. of C. finds the Club "reflecting credit upon the Church and Order," and a pupil of Laval University admires "the admirable association" and its Club.

A Canadian Engineer who has "been in several Clubs" thinks that "the C. A. C. has the preference over them all and makes one feel home-like, which is what the boys want." Three of our Polish Allies, welcomed by Catholics from far away, write an appreciation in their own language, and a fellow countryman in our own Canadian army adds in explanatory postscript that the Club is "all right." In poetical effusion, a Grenadier Guard, from the great Barracks nearby, wishes us:

*"Beer when you are hungry,  
Beer when you are dry;  
Bed when you are sleepy,  
And Heaven when you die."*

One may reasonably suppose that such stalwart sentiments came from one who was neither vegetarian, prohibitionist, tramp, nor atheist.

A Canadian Corporal finds the C. A. C. "so much like our own home with its amusements, etc., " and an anonymous scribe endorses his sentiments "plus the sincere spirit that pervades the whole place." A Belgian soldier on leave in London is glad to find "a Christian and military family" and says, "among our comrades in khaki there are none whom we love better than the valiant and robust comrades from Canada, Australia, and the United States, who have crossed the ocean without any material interest to affirm the solidarity, Christian and catholic (i.e. universal,) of civilization, and the rights of all, even the weak, to liberty."

A Canadian 3rd Division man offers "sincere wishes for the only home in Blighty." A sailor of the R. N. C. V. R. recommends the C. A. C. to his shipmates after a short stay in the Club which was "grand." A French Canadian soldier says: "One finds here a little of what one has left at home and the foretaste of that which one looks forward to soon regaining—the happiness of home." All the benefits of the Club, he notes, are available even to those "whose purses are nearly empty." An American soldier who has "roomed and boarded" for five months at the Canadian C. A. C. says, "I'll tell the world that I hate to leave here."

Another "American with the Canadian Forces" says: "I am glad to know that it was the K. of C. that has shown such a progressive spirit," and concludes: "I may say that the K. of C. has been instrumental in my coming back to the Church. I have been to confession after an absence of seventeen years. Keep up the good work."

A canny Canadian Scot, back from the Hebrides where he has spent his leave and his allowance, is thankful to find the Club when his "pennies were nearly all spent." In view of his deplenished purse he is thankful to find a "nice, comfortable and quiet place to have a good sleep."

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

Such are some of the testimonies of our grateful boys, chosen from among many. They prove more eloquently than could any words of our own, that the Clubs, whose cheery electric signs shone out on Grosvenor Place, were a haven of rest and refreshment physically and morally to all those who entered their portals.



## CHAPTER FIVE COUNTRY CAMPS.

**WITLEY.** But a few miles from Bramshott and within easy reach of the old world towns of Guildford and Godalming, was situated a camp which was long in use by the Canadian authorities. In 1917 two military huts were equipped—one in the Infantry Lines and one for the Cavalry. The "Infantry" hut served as Chapel and Recreation Room, while the "Cavalry" Hut, decorated with considerable skill by a Chaplain who received assistance for that purpose from the C. A. H., was used as a Chapel only and became a centre of Catholic devotion. The various Chaplains in charge of this large camp had long felt the need of more adequate quarters; but, although their needs were early represented to the Directors, it was found impossible to erect a C. A. H. building owing to the long and tiresome formalities required at that period by the Ministry of Munitions, the Ministry of National Service and the Army Council. The building of the Hut was thus held back for a long period; but when it did eventually get started at the end of 1918, it proved that its need had for long been urgent. A busy C. W. L. worker at the Hut found time to report to the London Directors as follows:

*"The Catholic Army Hut at Witley has been running a very short time. Owing to difficulties connected with the building it was only open at the end of January, so it was thought best to have no formal ceremony.*

*"The first evening we had 280 men and by the third night our number had gone up to 600. At that time Witley Camp was being used as a rest camp, the troops moving backwards and forwards to and from France. We had men from various units, engineers, artillery, but mostly infantry. We had during February an average of 500 men a day. In March the artillery arrived and increased our numbers to between 700 and 800 men a day. When they left we had a slack week, until in April, the 2nd Division were stationed at Witley and found out our Hut.*

"Since then our number has steadily increased, last night being 886. We keep count by a ticket system and can tell each day exactly how many men we have served.

"The men love the Hut and we hear many kind and complimentary remarks—"It's the best in the Camp"; "It's jake a bon." We give them tea, cakes, etc., in the morning and in the afternoon we have all sorts of puddings which are much appreciated. "Just like Mother makes" is often said; but we can't achieve a real Canadian pie. From 6.30 on we have hot suppers which the men love, especially egg and bacon nights. Nothing could be nicer or more considerate and polite than our Canadian customers, always patient about waiting their turn to be served and so ready to be pleased with everything. We are all sorry that we shall so soon lose them, although glad for them, that the tedious time of waiting is nearly over. We do hope that our Hut may have helped some of them to get through the long and difficult days.

"There are two very good billiard tables which are always in use, and the Canadian K. of C. keep us supplied with cigarettes and chewing gum free to the boys."

The building which met with such hearty appreciation was constructed of brick, in accordance with the exigencies of the authorities, and consisted of two sections. One wing contained a simple but dignified Chapel and the other the Recreation Room, Billiard Room and Canteen. This arrangement, like that which we have described at Bramshott, worked exceedingly well and showed forth the two-fold purpose of the C. A. H. in its religious and social ideals.

The following letter of appreciation was addressed to the Directors at the closing of the Hut:

"Now that the end of the Canadian occupation of Witley Camp is immediately at hand, I am writing on behalf of the General Officer Commanding (Brig. Gen. A. H. Bell, C.M.G., D.S.O.,) the Officers, N. C. Os and men, who have been stationed here, to express in some small measure the appreciation all ranks have for the assistance and entertainment provided by the Priests of the Roman Catholic Church, and the beneficence of the Order of the Knights of Columbus. To the generosity of your Church and its associations allied to it, the splendid Church building and recreation rooms in this camp under your direction, have been provided.



1. K. of C. Chapel Hut, Epsom, Eng.
2. K. of C. Hut with the 10th Reserve, France.

3. Corner of K. of C. Hut in France with 10th Reserve.
4. Kitchen of K. of C. Hut, Witley, Eng.

5. K. of C. Chapel Hut, Witley, Eng.



## Catholic Army Huts Activities

---

"In the Great War, recreation huts knew no sect or creed; all were welcome. Thousands will remember the comfort, entertainment, and welcome always provided in the Catholic Church Hut in Witley. I can only, in poorly phrased words, express on behalf of all ranks a full measure of thanks, wish you and your fellow workers God-speed and a safe return to your homes.

"Will you be good enough to convey our thanks and appreciation to all your helpers?"

To this official note of approval we may append the following letter from a friend in the ranks, which appeared in the "Catholic Record" of August 23, 1919:

### "THE CATHOLIC HUT" AT HOME AND ABROAD

Witley Camp, July 13, 1919.

"Why is it that the Troops speak so highly of the food, attendance and comfort of the Catholic Huts both in England and behind the Lines? Why do they yet call to mind, one with another, the good feeds and cleanly comfort of these Huts? Even as I write (waiting, as a mere private, for my return to Canada) the boys in my sleeping hut are praising the tasty "snacks which they were able to buy for reasonable rates at the Catholic Hut here in Witley Camp, England. Why? I wonder. Surely it cannot be that these people have larger funds than the Y. M. C. A. and similar institutions? We know the Y. M. C. A. provides really good "shows", etc; but I am speaking only of the food question. One can live without these amusements but not without nourishing food. We all know it always has been well nigh impossible to exist on army food alone. Why else these huge crowds that hung around the different 'dry' canteens?

"No, I feel sure it is not funds that gave us all this good tasty food and kindly attendance, because the greater bulk of the Catholic body are poor—some very poor. And yet the funds are forthcoming, blessed with a thousand silent prayers! Yea, and more so, dear friends, the funds are used in the spirit of real charity, it seems to me, or else how can this high standard of efficiency have been maintained all these years?

"Yes, dear friends, here I think we have the secret of all this clean, tasty, yet cheap food which the war-worn soldier sought with almost crying eagerness. God bless you all,

*dear Catholic workers, for this work of mercy so well fulfilled!*

*"Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, we all remember with grateful pleasure happy hours spent within your 'well-run' Hut!"*

**Shorncliffe.** The days at Shorncliffe Camp were numbered by the time that the C. A. H. had begun its work overseas. In this area, therefore, its activities were confined to the proper furnishing and equipment of Military Huts which were used as Chapels and Reading Rooms. Three centres—i.e., East Sandling, West Sandling and St. Martin's Plains—were helped out in this way, and their efficiency much increased. Up to the time when the C. A. H. began its work, the Chaplains were dependent on their own resources, or on the voluntary contributions of the Soldiers for the maintenance of these Chapel Huts. Subsequently they were helped out not only with the requisites of Divine Worship but also with abundant supplies of writing materials and other comforts available for all troops.

**Shoreham.** In the Fall of 1917 a number of Canadian troops, including the Engineers, were stationed in this Camp. The regular Army Chapel Huts had been withdrawn from the use of Chaplains (with the exception of two which were used for Protestant service) and the best accommodation which could be afforded to Catholics for Divine Service was the use of one-third of an Army Canteen. The middle of this building was in constant use as a Dry Canteen while, at the other end, army beer was dispensed. In spite of obvious drawbacks the Chaplain-in-charge fitted up the space at his disposal as a temporary Chapel. A C. A. H. Chapel Hut was asked for and its construction authorized by the Overseas Directors when a sudden movement order emptied the Camp of all Canadian Troops.

**Seaford.** The Canadian Engineers and the many Reserves who arrived at this Camp in 1917 found a welcome at the North Camp, in the shape of a large Catholic Chapel and General Recreation Room which had been

built by the Army Authorities while the English Troops were in occupation. The zealous parish priest of Seaford who managed this fine Hut in addition to his parochial duties and the Chaplaincy of a Convent, continued to give devoted service to his Canadian visitors. Nothing therefore remained for the C. A. H. but to co-operate with the Rev. Father by making supplies of stationery, etc. His indefatigable co-workers kept this Hut open during the whole period of Canadian occupation and thousands of Canadian soldiers of all creeds will remember the unassuming but highly satisfactory service of "Father Delphine's Hut."

In the South Camp conditions were not as good. The dingy R. C. Hut on a wind-swept hill, overlooking the little bay which looked so pretty in summer, received grants from the C. A. H. which enabled it to receive simple but artistic decorations at the hands of the soldiers themselves, assisted by a local priest. A neat altar replaced the makeshift erections of earlier days, and reading tables were supplied with books, magazines and writing paper. The need of a regular K. of C. Hut was keenly felt; but this need was not supplied until the summer of 1918. A fine central site was then secured and its all too brief history was one of unqualified success. Staffed, like all our Huts, by the experienced and capable ladies of the C. W. L., the Hut gained a reputation for "good eats" among thousands of hungry Canadians. A French-Canadian Chaplain, recently arrived overseas and new to the work of the C. A. H., writes to the Senior Chaplain after his first visits to the Huts: "I went there several times and it is delightful to see what the K. of C. have done and are doing." Later he adds: "The K. of C. Hut is crowded every evening; it is a credit to the Order and to their representatives abroad. I met in that Hut soldiers of all creeds and nationalities. I spoke last night to a little Japanese."

The social atmosphere of this Hut was marked by all that refinement and charm with which the ladies of

the League were able to invest their wonderful work. This charm of atmosphere was described in verse about that time by a Canadian Engineer who offered the following poetic tribute:

TO THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ARMY HUT,  
SEAFORD, ENGLAND.

*"There is something real, enchanting, 'bout this Knights of old Columbus;*

*That brings a comfy feeling to the coldness of my heart,  
And I feel I'd like to say it, on this little sheet of paper,  
Ere I wander forth again, folks, in the wetness and the dark.*

*"I had dropped in sort of casual, 'cause I saw some others enter  
And I followed in their footsteps, felt that warmth there was inside,  
And my heart was sort of lonely, thinking of the far off homeland  
And the good old 'Pals' behind, out in France, where they had died.*

*"Dear young ladies served the counter, gave with smiles my little supper,*

*And I read a few short pages of the 'Pathway on to Rome',  
Then I took an easy 'sit down' in a good chair in a corner  
And sat and thought of Canada and the good folks at home.*

*"No one seemed to pay attention, I was made to feel quite 'homey'  
As I watched the lads around me, sitting, reading, here and there,  
And I watched in quiet interest, the actions of the brown dog,  
As he crawled so innocently in the big cane-sided chair.*

*"Yes, in memory there will linger, the brightness that has reached me  
Of the side of life that's pleasing, to an honest, lonely heart,  
And I'll not forget 'Columbus,' nor the club that's always open  
To the soldier who is weary, when I happen to depart."*

On the closing of the Camp at the end of June, 1919, the capable manageress received the following letter of appreciation from Col. J. G. Rattray of Canadian Headquarters at Seaford:

*"I am given to understand that you are closing the Catholic Army Hut at an early date.*

*"That being the case I wish on behalf of the many Canadian soldiers who have been in the Seaford Area Camp, to express to you our appreciation of the splendid work that you and your helpers in your hut have done.*

*"It is impossible to measure the result of your work. Our men were away from their homes and lived under conditions and surroundings so foreign to our ideas of home life; but the efforts of you and your assistants have been such as to*

## Catholic Army Huts Activities

---

*make these conditions and surroundings as pleasant as possible and I can assure you that many homes in Canada will thank you for your kindness to their sons.*

*"Permit me also to thank you very sincerely for the important part you have taken in these trying hours of demobilization, in helping to keep the men comfortable and contented.*

*"With every good wish for the future and with the hope that the time has passed for ever for the occasion to have you and your assistants to devote themselves to WAR WORK, but that hereafter it will be for the benign benefit of a worthy peace."*

**Cooden.** A good opportunity. In the summer of 1918 a Convalescent Hospital bearing the name of Princess Patricia, was opened at Cooden in Sussex to receive casualties from all units of the Canadian Army. On the 24th of June a Cinema Tent was provided by the C. A. H. and served during the summer time. As winter came on with its high winds and rough weather the tent was replaced to the regret of many "Old Contemptibles" by the usual Section Hut which provided a large Recreation Room with stage and "green room," a Canteen, and a small Chapel with its Sacristy.

The Chaplain in charge at that time, "one of the breeziest and best," made the Hut known to every soldier in the vicinity, including a group of discharged "Imperials" from the Metropolitan Convalescent Home.

Much interest centred in the Billiard Room where tournaments were held and prizes given. Gunner Ibbotson, the English Champion of Canada, while a patient at Cooden, took charge and gave exhibition games daily. From time to time a "Whist Drive" was given; but the special feature at this Hut was that it has its own Concert Party, known as the "Parakeets", which did excellent work in entertaining the sick and wounded not only at Cooden, but also at Hastings, St. Leonard's, Eastbourne and (by special request) at the Public Colonade in Bexhill. At a gala Dinner given in Cooden Camp, the R. S. M. referred to the work done by the Catholic Hut Troop as having done more than anything

else to make the name of the "Princess Pat's Hospital" well and favorably known to the outside public.

Soldiers' requisites and refreshments were at all times sold at cost price. From time to time, in accordance with C. A. H. principles, a "free feed" was given to all comers. Besides this every newcomer was entitled to a "free lunch" which was much appreciated by the sick and wounded men whose pay was but two pounds a month. One grateful visitor informed his comrades, "If you want anything for nothing—be it only a smile—go to the Catholic Hut."

One section of the camp specially remembered was the Guard Room. A free supper was sent each night to the inhabitants of the "clink" who voluntarily shared it with their Guard.

It was calculated that a total of 80,000 cigarettes supplied through the C. A. H. funds were distributed during six or seven Sunday evenings. "No more welcome gift," writes the Manageress, "has ever been made in this War."

All the work of this Hut was conducted by three resident ladies assisted by voluntary workers who were, it is interesting to note, "at least fifty per cent non-Catholics." The military "staff" of ten workers received a nominal weekly wage; but, says the Report cited, from the happy spirit that prevails in the kitchen and by the humour that overcomes all obstacles, the work of the Hut would seem to be entirely voluntary for all concerned. At the other side of the counter, life appeared to be equal fun, to judge by the prevailing spirit of comradeship. "Tell you what, this outfit's a home" was a verdict frequently overheard. "The Hut", continues the Report received, was "fortunate in having these happy crowds of laughing boys in and out all day, fortunate also in possessing the good will of all ranks."

A correspondent of the lively local review known as "Princess Pat's Post" says of this Hut:

"The generous folk who endowed it chose a suitable term in calling the hut Catholic which, it is needless to

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

say (that's why I say it) means universal. Totally un-sectarian, pleasure and comfort and warmth are to be found within its hallowed walls.

"The Hut is of goodly proportions. A stage capable of accommodating many performers is at one end. Numerous tables scattered over the floor allow of small parties having tea and gossip together. Tea and cake-making conveniences exist near the counters, over which a constant stream of these and delectables from the shelves passes. A great feature of the institute is the free bun struggle. This occurs when takings have amounted to such a sum as warrants the occasion. A complete clearance of everything eatable or drinkable and smokeable then takes place and every visitor is allowed a goodly share of the comforts. Like the canteen of the Opposition, there is no sign of the ale cask, but who, except a Hun would think of beer, after gazing at the heavenly comfort of the place, or getting a glimpse of the loveliness waiting to attend to him from behind the counter."

In an article by the manageress in the same review we read:

*"Well, I think everybody had a very happy time this Christmas. The enjoyment began with the Christmas preparations. For days beforehand one couldn't see for holly and evergreens and as for pink and white paper chains—I wish their womenfolk in Canada could have seen all those boys solemnly sitting around pasting those bits of coloured paper together. They sat on the stage and they overflowed into the official sanctum and there they worked and they smoked and they told tales of No Man's Land, until my hair stood on end; or they told of free shootings in (say) North Carolina, or they went off on the trail somewhere along the Yukon where the thermometer registered something wicked and Cooden Camp seemed as though it never was; anyhow, the paper chains lengthened and our thanks are due to Drum-Sergeant Trainer, Sergt. Ray and Pte Grant (and their assistant decorators) for all they did for us and particularly for the way in which they decorated the Chapel, showing that this was a real labour of love. On Xmas Eve after Midnight Mass, a couple of hundred soldiers were entertained to supper, and it felt like the real thing to see all those boys looking so cheery and so happy and to hear those Xmas greetings from*

*the men who had gone down to the very gates of hell to bring back the greatest victory that history has ever known, to an anxious and waiting world.*

"Next morning at 9.30 a. m. the Canteen opened and from that time till 9.30 p. m. every man in the Camp was an invited guest. Of course, some of the boys were away on pass; but except for these, I think every man showed up. There were no deserters that day. And we want every boy to know how pleased the workers were to see them all, because when a canteen is offered in this Hut, we expect "every man to do his duty," as Nelson did before; and as Nelson was not disappointed, neither were we—the boys just rolled up, knowing how welcome they were. And I can assure them that this Christmas day among the Canadians in Cooden Camp will be one of happy memories to every worker in the Catholic Hut—a memory to be treasured up in the piping days of Peace."

In conclusion she adds:

*"It is the express wish of the Knights that there should be no profit made from any of their Army Hut Canteens. And particularly is it their wish that in this convalescent Camp, where the sick men have less money than the sound, that free refreshments should be offered from time to time, as a thank-offering to the fighting men of the Dominion for all they have done in the cause of Right and Freedom."*

We may be sure that the writer of these lines had fully grasped the spirit of the C. A. H. and adapted it to the happy Hut in which she reigned as "Queen of Cooden."

**Bexhill.** During the 1917-1918 Canadian Cadets Training School and the French Warfare School were stationed at Bexhill and a small club conducted by the ladies of the Catholic Women's League offered grateful hospitality to the newcomers. Early in the summer of 1918 it was felt that the C. A. H. should assume financial responsibility for its activities upon a larger scale. Through the prompt interest of a local resident, a suitable building on the main street of the town was secured and rented by our London Office. This was fitted up by the experienced ladies of the C. W. L. as a non-residential Club. Military requirements as to the status of Cadets were tactfully met by the provision of special writing

and Recreation Rooms for them. Meanwhile the rank and file, including many hospital patients from the nearby Hospitals at Cooden, were well looked after and the visitors, mostly non-Catholics, appreciated the capable, cheerful service afforded to them by a local priest assisted by a staff of ladies under his direction and that of the C. W. L. In a letter written at the closing of the Club this priest says: "Canadians have become very dear to me." We may feel sure that those who gave such welcome to their visitors became, in their turn, very dear to Canadians and that the remembrance of their faithful service will live long after the strenuous days of training and the tedious days of hospital life have been forgotten.

**Sunningdale.** This Canadian Forestry Corps Camp, situated in Windsor Forest, was for some time attended to by a local priest-officer. Through his efforts an "Army Hut" was fitted up and provided with the requisites of Divine Worship and the usual supplies of comforts.

**Mytchett and Orpington.** Towards the end of 1918 the Officer Commanding the Canadian Musketry Camp at Mytchett asked for a K. of C. Recreation Hut; but, though the C. A. H. was ready to provide this permission was refused by the (British) Aldershot Command on account of real uncertainties as to the future. At the Ontario Hospital at Orpington our failure was due to other causes. The Directors here experienced their only real deadlock with regard to Canadian authorities throughout the period of their work. If there was no Catholic Army Hut in the grounds of this Hospital, it was surely not any fault of the Directors, who did every thing in their power to offer the advantages of the K. of C. fund for the comfort of the sick and wounded who would certainly have appreciated its services.

**Purfleet.** Though the Canadian Railway Troops who made their Headquarters at this Camp, never had the advantages of a regular K. of C. Hut, the various Chaplains who were stationed there, or sent temporarily

to minister to its occupants, did their best to fit up the two Military Huts which were tentatively allotted to them. After the organization of our Fund these Chaplains, like all others, received their supplies from the London Office.

**Epsom.** The successive Chaplains attached to this Canadian Hospital made many efforts to obtain permission from the Imperial authorities for the erection of a Chapel and Recreation Hut. This was at last obtained in the autumn of 1918; the beautifully furnished chapel was opened at Christmas time and served during the concluding months of the camp. Before that time, the C. A. H. provided comforts and books for the boys, through the Catholic Chaplain, who was an Imperial lent to the Canadian Service.

## CHAPTER SIX

### HERE AND THERE IN FRANCE AND GERMANY.

THE record of the C. A. H. in France is necessarily limited in its scope and that for two reasons. In the first place it was not found possible to extend its activities until a late date in the war and in the second place it is obvious that it would have been necessary to have for satisfactory organization a complete military establishment consisting of at least fifty officers, a proportionate number of "other ranks," and a number of motor lorries. All this was lacking and we can only trust that this honest War record of the C. A. H. will bring about, as one of its results, a determination that the K. of C. should in future military activities obtain a status identical to that of other Societies.

Lacking all "establishment," the Directors had to count upon the Catholic Chaplains, most of whom had been at the Front for long periods and had their hands full with religious ministrations over large and difficult areas with notoriously poor means of transport.

No work of a permanent nature could be established in mobile units, for the simple reason that Chaplains already experienced difficulty in obtaining transport for themselves and their kit. Even the tiny box which contained their altar requisites was sometimes accepted with reluctance by the much-tried Transport Officers. The important work done was therefore carried on at a tremendous disadvantage and reflects great credit upon the courage of the valiant chaplains who had so long wished for a helping hand in their incessant work.

In January, 1918, a chapel tent was sent to the 22nd French-Canadian Battalion and the Senior Chaplain writes to the London Office: "Father Crochetière has his chapel tent erected in the 22nd Batt. lines and it is much admired by all who have seen it." Those who followed the fortunes of our Canadian Chaplains in the field will remember that the brave priest who used this gift

of the Canadian people for the benefit of the troops who loved and revered him, soon afterwards laid down his life for his flock and breathed his last in the trenches with them.

In February, four Chapel Tents were erected behind the Canadian line in the Lens Sector. These proved extraordinarily useful to the Chaplains who received them. One of them writes soon after:

*"I am writing this from one of your chapel tents erected in the very centre of a vast encampment of troops. Battalions in reserve, artillery wagon lines, engineers, tunnellers, etc., are, like the famous guns in the charge of the Light Brigade, all about me. I had scarcely moved in and was just unrolling my bed, when a Tommy came to confession and Holy Communion. To-day some engineers bound for the front line stepped in to strengthen themselves for what perhaps may be before them. Not fifty yards away is a Dressing Station that clears this whole front. Beside it the Military Cemetery with its row upon row of pathetic crosses. I consider that my efficiency has been increased a hundredfold. If you worked no other good than this single chapel tent has so far worked, you would be amply rewarded for all the trouble you have taken. I have no doubt that God will bless you for it."*

Later he writes:

*"The tent is going strong. All the Tommies know my situation now and my services are required daily."*

Subsequently he adds:

*"The Chapel Tent is doing yeoman service—a boon to the Catholic Soldiers that the daily list of communicants attests."*

Eleven of these tents were thus dispatched to Canadian Corps and though some were commandeered for military service the majority were used for the purpose for which they were sent. One large Recreation Marquee, sent to the 12th Infantry Brigade, did not arrive on account of transport difficulties.

When the time came for the Canadian Troops to move towards Germany, various attempts were made to extend C. A. H. facilities. One of the Chaplains made

great efforts to have a club opened in Brussels; but although this project did not materialize, the 11th Brigade Chaplain was able to locate a house at Boitsford and on the arrival of the troops at this village, in January, 1919, attractive premises were secured for the C. A. H. near the Church. The plan of the club included the usual facilities for reading, writing and recreation, as well as a class-room fitted with seats and desks, in which subjects connected with the military education scheme were studied. The Chaplain posted there writes:

*"It is an evidence of the sincerity of the men to prepare themselves to return to civil life when one visits this class-room and sees their earnestness to profit by the opportunity afforded them in the matter of education."*

Besides the students there was always

*"The platoon of men who enjoyed sitting around the fires, owing to the cold days and evenings of the winter, just to smoke and take another trip in memory over some famous battlefield, or recall some interesting episode."*

The Club was in fact a great success up to the month of April and the Chaplain wrote grateful acknowledgment of prompt C. A. H. service when the time came to move on toward the Rhine.

Meanwhile, the 4th Brigade Canadian Engineers arrived at Nil St. Vincent in February, 1919. A vacant villa was then taken over and used as a C. A. H. Soldiers' Club. The building had no furniture; but permission to "commandeer" was given by the local Burgomaster and used with success. In this way four rooms were comfortably fitted up for reading, writing, recreation and the dispensing of cocoa and biscuits. During the month of the Brigade's residence about 75 soldiers used the club each day and 800 cups of cocoa were dispensed. Both these temporary clubs were conducted without "establishment" and by the energy of already overworked Chaplains. The Chaplain of the 72 Battalion asked the C. A. H. to provide a Christmas dinner for all ranks of

his Battalion and the C. A. H., as usual, delivered the goods.

In the course of time, when the victorious army entered the Rhineland, temporary clubs were fitted up for the 22nd French-Canadians and for the 2nd Brigade near Bonn.

The interests of these scattered troops who did so much work—often unseen and laborious and sometimes heroic—were carefully attended to by the Chaplain of the 7th Battalion, who utilized three tents and the Chaplain of the 8th Battalion, who obtained one. In another railway Battalion, the Chaplain was provided with a library.

The first Canadian Casualty Clearing Station received a Chapel Tent which did good service, as also that provided to the 2nd Canadian Stationary Hospital. A tiny Hut, which had been begun by an Imperial Chaplain with the help of a Canadian soldier, had already been enlarged and fitted up by the C. A. H. in 1917 as Chapel and Reading Room at Le Treport.

At Etaples, a small Chapel was erected in the beginning of 1918 and served until the first Canadian General Hospital moved out after it and the Chapel had been attacked by enemy bombs.

The refusal of the O. C. of the McGill unit to allow a Chapel tent or even C. A. H. Recreation Marquee on the grounds of his Hospital under the plea that he did not want denominationalism, proved to the Directors that the broad platform of the C. A. H. was not understood in all quarters. A few months later, however, the arrival of a new O. C. simplified matters and this unit (No. 3. Canadian General) received its chapel hut.

A Hut was built for the 8th (French) Canadian General Hospital; but transportation difficulties prevented its erection and it was finally used at le Havre. A complete C. A. H. Hut was installed for the Laval (No. 6 Canadian General) Hospital at Joinville, near Paris. As the Canadian and British patients of this hospital were receiving the strange and unaccustomed rations of the French

Army, they were furnished by the C. A. H. with tea, jam and cigarettes. General Turner, who visited this hospital in December, 1918, informed Mr. W.T. Kernahan, Overseas Commissioner, that he considered this was "the most complete Hut that he had ever seen." Later, the first thing he mentioned in conversation was the Joinville Hut and the pleasure it had given him and the men.

A Recreation Room was also fitted up for the 8th Canadian General Hospital at St. Cloud in February, 1919.

That the Chapel Tents in hospital units were appreciated by the Catholic Troops may be seen in the following extract from a letter written to the Overseas Secretary-Treasurer in August 1918:

*"I desire to take this opportunity to thank you in the name of the Catholics of this unit (C. A. M. C.) for the very fine Chapel Tents which you have so kindly donated to us. It certainly is a pleasure out here in France to have a place of our own where we can meet and practise our religion. We are able now for the first time to have the Blessed Sacrament with us continually and you may be assured that your donation will do much to help us to be better Catholics."*

**At The Base—Etaples.** When the stream of Canadian demobilization arrived at this place, the "Oratory Hut"—a flourishing concern which had been conducted by an English Catholic layman, Mr. Stephen Harding,—was soon surrounded by Canadian troops. The Overseas Commissioner, who was in France at the time, therefore suggested the purchase of this Hut in preference to any scheme of new buildings at so late a date. Through the courtesy of Mr. Harding, satisfactory arrangements were soon made and a new roof-sign "Canadian Catholic Army Hut" greeted the soldiers half a mile away. While this camp was full, about 2,000 men used the C. A. H. Canteen each day and about 2,500 free hot drinks were supplied, with a packet of biscuits in each case. The Canteen also provided the usual supplies at nominal prices and the billiard-room attached—"the proud possessor of the only full-sized

table in the camp"—was booked every minute of the opening hours. Here again the devoted ladies of the C. W. L. maintained the high standard which they had established in their Huts and our own. An eye-witness says: "The permanent crowd outside the Canteen was a mute tribute to the goodness of the things dispensed therein."

On Jan. 29, 1919, an appreciative Chaplain visitor notes that "the Oratory Hut is being run by three workers all Protestants," and it is pleasant to think that these good non-Catholic workers appreciated the spirit in which the C. A. H. was conducted.

A visiting Chaplain writes in March, 1919:

*"The Hut at Etaples is proving extraordinarily useful, and when I visited it yesterday afternoon did not have a vacant seat."*

**Le Havre.** The biggest and best achievement of the C. A. H. overseas was undoubtedly that which was attained by the Chaplains of the Canadian Embarkation Camp at Le Havre in January, 1919. Their first idea was to equip a club in the town proper; but owing to its distance from the camp and the short average stay of Units passing through, it was decided to work in or near the camp itself. Pressure of work awaiting the Camp Engineers made it difficult to erect a Hut within the lines and the Chaplains were therefore pleased to be able to acquire the "Patronage," or Boys' Club, belonging to the neighboring Parish of Notre Dame des Neiges. This building, a frame construction 45 feet square, was rented from the parish priest, repaired, and finally equipped by February 8th. "From the first day" says the report, "the Club was well patronised by men from the various Canadian Units in the Camp and by Imperial soldiers as well." Comfortably heated and nicely decorated, it was an attractive spot in the cold weather. The piano and gramophone were in constant use—games helped to pass idle hours....those who wanted to write found stationery ....those who wished to read found papers and books."

*K. of C. Huts in France*



1. Havre

2. Le Tréport.

3. Havre

4. Havre





## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

A great attraction was the free distribution of hot drinks with biscuits and cigarettes. For the month of February the daily average was 50 gallons of coffee and cocoa, 50 boxes of biscuits and 2,000 cigarettes.

A Gymnasium attached to the Club was re-equipped and well used. When the weather grew finer the baseball enthusiasts took over the boys' playground, using up two dozen gloves and eight dozen balls in three months.

Meanwhile the Catholic Army Hut material had arrived and, all obstacles having been surmounted, the building was opened on February 27th within the camp. Though its floor area was 60 x 20 ft., it speedily proved none too large and the Camp Commandant kindly came to the rescue with two Nissen Huts to serve as Kitchen and Store Room. The Chaplain-in-charge writes on this date:

*"The Y. M. C. A. loaned us tables, flags, streamers and a gramophone. Their new Hut is not ready yet. To-day, we served over 900 bowls of coffee in the K. of C. and about 500 in the Canadian Hut.*

While the "Patronage" was almost as well filled as before, the C. A. Hut was thronged from morning to night. The daily average of free lunches consumed from between the two Huts 100 gallons of hot drinks, 100 packets of biscuits and 8,000 cigarettes. About seven hundred letters were written each day in the Huts.

The statistics conserved by the Chaplain in charge of this strenuous work show that, when the Huts closed on May 11th with the departure of the last transient troops, they had made a free distribution of: 120,000 bowls of tea, coffee and cocoa; 8,000 lbs. of biscuits; 570,000 cigarettes; 6,000 boxes of matches. The slogan, "Everything Free", was lived up to—not a cent nor a centime was a soldier charged for anything. In addition to this several thousand cigarettes were distributed in the Hospitals.

The permanent staff of the camp, numbering over a thousand, was provided with recreational facilities in their own quarters. At the special request of the Camp

Commandant, the C. A. H. helped out with their rations and a grant of 3,700 francs was made to assist the Regimental Institutes.

The Camp Commandant expressed his thanks to the C. A. H. in the following letter of appreciation:

*"I would like to thank the C. A. H. and associated with them, the Knights of Columbus, for the great assistance they have rendered to Canadian soldiers leaving a port in France for the last time. These organizations under your direction have done much toward the splendid record made by this camp in our share toward winding up the war."*

To this very hearty appreciation we may fitly add that of Brigadier General Embury, G. O. C. Canadian Section G. H. Q., France, addressed to the Reverend Director in France:

CANADIAN SECTION GENERAL HEADQUARTERS  
1st Echelon,  
6TH MAY, 1919.

MAJOR (REV.) JOHN J. O'GORMAN  
D.A.D.C.S. Canadian Section  
G.H.Q.

*Mr Dear O'Gorman,*

*"I am very glad to be able to tell you that the work which has been done by the Catholic Army Huts during the period of demobilization at Etaples and at Havre and at other points, has been of a very valuable character and has been most highly appreciated. There have been no suggestions which we have been able to make which have not been acted upon quickly and efficiently and the help which the Catholic Army Huts were able to afford at the period when demobilization set in, came at a time when it was most valuable."*

*Yours sincerely,*

(SGD.) J. F. L. EMBURY.

It will thus be seen that the C. A. H. Association has every reason to be proud of the intense activity shown by the chaplains with the help of many devoted volunteers during a period of exceptional stress.



Lt.-Col. Rev. F. L. French, D.S.O., head of the Canadian R. C. Chaplains in France,  
Director K. of C. Catholic Army Huts 1917-18-19-20-21-22



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HOSPITALS AND A DISCHARGE DEPOT.

THE charming town of Buxton, nestling among the Derbyshire hills and world-famed for its pure air and healing springs, was surely well chosen as a place of convalescence and demobilization. The Catholic Chaplains serving this area, which included two large Hospitals as well as the "Discharge Depot" in which they lived, had for some time noticed the regrettable lack of recreational facilities in the town. Numbers of Hospital convalescents who were free all day and of men waiting for discharge who were free each evening, paced the streets of Buxton without any healthy rendezvous. As usual in these circumstances an undeniable element of society lost no time in putting out its tentacles. Seeing this the Chaplain who "took over" in the Fall of 1918 decided, in spite of uncertainties as to the future, to construct a Catholic Army Hut in the very centre of the town. Through the good offices of a patriotic local resident, a fine site intended for a Drill Hall was rented from the Derbyshire Yeomanry and in a short time the Sectional Hut was in position and being fitted up as Chapel and Recreation Room. Patients from the Hospitals and men from the Depot gave generous help in unloading the heavy sections and in decorating the hut with an artistic colour scheme of rose and green. The chapel and sacristy section closed off by movable partitions was fitted up with an altar and a beautiful Gothic Tabernacle lent by a friendly Chaplain in Manchester. Several ladies of the little Catholic congregation gave great help in fitting up the Hut and directing its entertainments, while during the cold days of building it, some non-Catholic ladies living opposite provided the workers with hot tea each day. An exterior sign flooded with electric light called the attention of soldiers passing on the Main street to the new K. of C. "Victory Hut" and for several weeks before the official opening the Hut was well patronized. On Mid Advent Sunday the Overseas

Secretary-Treasurer celebrated Mass in the Chapel and his Lordship the Bishop of Leeds addressed the Catholic soldiers at the Gospel. In the afternoon a considerable number of Buxtonians, including the genial mayor and many other residents of Buxton, mainly non-Catholic, came to meet his Lordship and expressed their gratitude to the C. A. H. for providing the Canadian visitors with such a splendid social centre. Noticeable among these visitors was the Senior (Presbyterian) Chaplain of the Fourth Canadian Division, who was recovering from wounds at a local hospital at the time. In a genuinely sympathetic speech he congratulated the Hut Chaplain, with whom he had been associated in France, on the success of the new venture.

The Club, thus auspiciously launched, started on a career of great usefulness. A weekly Whist Drive, with prizes donated by local residents or the C. A. H., was followed by a Dance which, under the careful chaperoning of Buxton ladies, was kept select and refined. Hospital patients were the object of special attention and received an ample share of free "eats" and free cigarettes, while at all times and to all comers the good things of the Hut were provided at the lowest prices and all profits absorbed in free distributions. By a change of policy the Chapel was dismantled under the regime of a later chaplain and the additional space thus gained used for recreational purposes. Devotional exercises were subsequently held at the Parish Church and even so, the "Victory Hut" was all too small for the thronging crowds who frequented its cherished precincts. To facilitate the prompt delivery of letters and telegrams which played so great a part in the destiny of the demobilized at Buxton, a post office department was opened for continuous delivery of mail. Free tea or coffee was given to all comers and a nominal price charged for admission to entertainments. The zealous and devoted chaplain who directed the work in its last developments wrote to the Overseas Secretary on July 3rd, 1919:

## Catholic Army Huts Activities

---

*"On the evenings of the 27th and 28th, also for the whole day of the 29th (Peace signing) everything was free in the canteen. We had a surplus stock of cakes and came to the conclusion that the best way to reduce satisfactorily would be a 'peace celebration'. We have received everything we asked for: tobacco T. G., ten cases each containing twenty thousand, for which I have sent the required undertaking with the Colonel's signature; 20,000 cigarettes from Player and Sons; pens, pen-holders and cribbage boards. I believe we have already acknowledged bountiful supplies of chewing gum and stationery. For everything accept our thanks."*

Owing to the fact that the Victory Hut, snug and inviting in its rocky cleft behind Spring Gardens, was the only Soldiers' Hut in town, its usefulness continued up and until the very end of demobilization. Many Canadian Sisters from the Hospital staffs were frequent visitors with their patients and those responsible for the Hut will not soon forget the help of a vigorous young "M. O." and a genial "R. S. M." who were never wanting when their services were required. Those who contributed to the erection of this successful Hut will be glad to think that it was a very haven of refuge to "returning" men and to the patients who were frequently held for weary months of waiting until they were fit to travel. Though its usefulness seemed problematical at the time of its erection, it more than justified the venture of faith and was a bright link in the chain of C. A. H. benefits overseas. Even when the Hospitals had returned the last of their patients and the Discharge Depot had fulfilled its functions, the Chaplain-in-charge of this Hut stayed on and gave devoted service to the wives and dependents of Canadian soldiers detained by the various difficulties of repatriation.

The Canadian Chaplains posted to Buxton were so fully occupied with religious and social work that it was almost impossible for them to give more than occasional visits to the Canadian boys convalescing in the numerous hospitals of Manchester. On one of these visits the Chaplain found our men enthusiastic in praise of a British Chaplain who had worked throughout the war for their benefit. Through his energetic, devoted and broad-

minded service to all, this Chaplain has become well known among people of Manchester and he was able to associate our boys with many benefits which they would otherwise not have received. All this work has been carried on without any appeal to Canadian generosity and it was felt that the C. A. H. should help out the good work now that it had come to their notice. The Chaplain in question was therefore put into communication with the Overseas Directors and enabled to help Canadian soldiers with Canadian money and gifts. In one of his letters acknowledging receipt of a C. A. H. donation for comforts the Chaplain writes: "I went into a ward this morning and found one of your boys trying to shave himself with a piece of lint so I at once went out and bought a shaving brush. Not a big thing; but it made all the difference."

It was a great pleasure for the Directors to be able to acknowledge a long period of religious and social activities by helping out this excellent priest who is as famous among Manchester folk, as amongst the soldiers who passed through this hospital, for cheerful and ungrudging service to all.

## CHAPTER EIGHT DEMOBILIZATION CAMPS.

**KINMEL Park, Rhyl.** The first R. C. Chaplain appointed to this area in the Fall of 1918 obtained the use of Two Army Huts and received the usual supplies of devotional articles and notepaper, together with a regular supply of French-Canadian and other papers to cope with the demands of his troops. In the Spring of 1919, the unsettled conditions in camp and the growing unrest among the men, made it more than ever advisable that we should develop our work

On St. Patrick's Day, 1919, the C. A. H. made its first big free distribution of cigarettes and served its first free supper. The celebration had been arranged in one of the Chapel Huts; but the crowd was so great that the lady-in-charge of the nearest "Navy and Army Canteen" was prevailed upon the allow the use of the big premises at her disposal. Through the kindness of a party of friends from Rhyl and the cheerful service of the "Canteen Ladies," this first social evening was well enjoyed by the Irish and French boys who were speedily joined by a large number of non-Catholics. All were both surprised and gratified to get "buckshee treat" at a moment when finances were low and life uninteresting.

Meanwhile the "double hut," which had already seen service at Frensham Pond, was in process of re-erection. Shortly before its completion the unhappy riots of Ash Wednesday, 1919, ravaged the camp, and it is worthy of note that the unfinished K. of C. Hut, standing empty and at the mercy of the rioters, shared with the Church Army and Salvation Army institutions in the honour of being left intact. Here, as in the case of similar riots at Witley, the men would not lay a hand upon institutions which they considered to have treated them "on the square."

Through the zeal and energy of a newly arrived French-Canadian Chaplain, the local difficulties of transportation,

workers' accommodation, etc., were overcome and, by dint of his relentless energy, the Hut soon opened its doors and got into full swing. The extra "good eats," provided by a staff of paid workers recruited in the locality, became known and appreciated throughout the entire camp. The coffee—strong, fragrant and refreshing—was in great request during the morning hours, until a protest to Headquarters from a senior organization obliged our Hut to retard its time of opening. From time to time, in accordance with C. A. H. principles, a free "bun struggle" was held and everything eatable and drinkable disappeared.

At all times the canteen was abundantly supplied with quantities of cigarettes and chewing gum—the latter provided by the Canadian Red Cross for free distribution. The immediate success of this hut may be gauged by the following extract from a letter sent to the London Office by the Hut Chaplain:

*"The Hut is now opened and to-day (the fifth day after the opening) we had more than three thousand soldiers in and served nearly fifteen hundred cups of coffee. The Hut is becoming very popular. We shall have concerts at least twice a week. If you favour us with a visit, I am sure you will be satisfied at the way the work is carried on."*

A popular feature was the Library and Writing Room. The orderly in charge of this had also a good supply of athletic accessories which were in frequent demand.

This extensive work was carried on without respite until the approaching closing of the camp obliged the C. A. H. to close its doors towards the end of May. The brightness and cheer provided by this Hut and its energetic workers was of the very greatest use as a safety valve to a Camp in which the tension of feeling ran very high at times. While Catholics of all nationalities mingled within its portals, it was used by men of all persuasions who much appreciated the fact that the "good eats" and the generous policy of the C. A. H. with regard to comforts was unaccompanied by any atmosphere of "religiosity." At the same time our Catholic Chapel, four camps away, suitably fitted up through the assist-



1. Group of lady workers at K. of C. Hut, Seaforth, Eng.
2. Interior of K. of C. Hut, Ripon, Eng.
3. Interior of K. of C. Hut, Seaforth, Eng.
4. Interior of K. of C. Hut, Buxton, Eng.
5. Staff of workers at K. of C. Hut, Buxton, Eng.



## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

ance of our organization, was daily filled with reverent worshippers, so that the three or four Catholic Chaplains attached to the camp had always their hands full of work. We may add that abundant supplies of cigarettes were distributed, through the Hospital Chaplain and the Ward-Sisters, to all sick and wounded men regardless of creed. Thus the C. A. H. carried on its beneficent work up to the very end.

**Ripon.** Together with Witley, Buxton and Rhyl, this Camp was used as a dispersal centre for Canadians. The Chaplains in charge found on arrival that an epidemic of influenza, which ran for six weeks, prevented social work among the troops. During this time, however, much "fixing up" was done on an Army Hut in the 13th Reserve, so that when the embargo was lifted, it came into immediate use. Meanwhile, the C. W. L. Hut, which had already done good service on behalf of Imperial Troops, entered into partnership with the C. A. H., which assumed financial responsibility during the uncertain period of demobilization. Needless to say, the high standard maintained in all C. W. L. Huts was continued under the C. A. H. combine and gave the greatest satisfaction to all concerned. At the closing of the Camp in August 1919, the Hut Secretary, acknowledging receipt of Service Badges for herself and her co-workers, writes as follows;

*"We shall always value the brooches as souvenirs of a very happy six months when we were able to be of service to the Canadian Troops at Ripon Camp. During that time we had not a single disagreeable Canadian soldier in our Hut. Shortly before closing, we were visited by the Canadian G. O. C. General Armond and were thanked by him for our work for the troops."*



## CHAPTER NINE OUR LONDON OFFICE

**A**t the beginning of the work done by the Overseas Directors and particularly by the Secretary-Treasurer, the C. A. H. had its office with the Chaplain Service. About the time that the Secretary-Treasurer "took over" the "lines of communication" in France the Canadian H. Q. were able to provide a large office room at Argyll House. At the same time the first "Military Establishment" was made by the appointment of a Lieutenant who did much good work in conjunction with a new Overseas Secretary and a staff of two orderly clerks.

The office files, which have been perused throughout by the compiler of this account, show that the staff was in daily communication, not only with the Chaplains in England and France, but also with Commanding Officers anxious to enlist the services of the C. A. H. on behalf of their men.

The supply of devotional articles, promised by the Constitution, was regular and abundant. Catholic prayer books, issued from H. M. Stationery Office in English and French, were procured and distributed together with Rosaries, Scapular Medals, etc. All possible centres were provided free with C. A. H. notepaper and envelopes, which went out at the rate of 200,000 sheets a month.

An American Corporal, having located the Canadian K. of C., writes: "Would you be good enough to send me some writing paper and envelopes for the boys of our company? I am mail orderly and will see that it is not wasted. If you have none on hand please give me the address of someone who could supply us. There are no K. of C. huts in our Section." Needless to say an abundant supply was sent.

Over 4,000 Books (devotional, educative and fictional) were sent out each month, mainly through the happy association of the C.A H. with the "Bexhill Library" whose

excellent system was a great help in providing the troops with good literature.

As a result of the much-needed establishment of the "Holy Name Society" in the Canadian Corps, it was decided to issue a pamphlet which would bring the objects of the Society to the attention of the troops. This pamphlet, worded in such a way that its objects could be subscribed to by men of all denominations was prefaced with earnest and convincing recommendations, by General Currie and the Divisional Commanders. A removable slip enabled the reader to subscribe his adhesion to the Society in writing and the wide-spreading of this pamphlet did enormous good in stemming the tide of blasphemy which, if often material and unconscious through long habit, was none the less regrettable. Various impressions brought the number printed up to a grand total of 80,000 and the C. A. H. may well be congratulated on an enterprise so much in accordance with the spirit of their Constitution.

No reasonable request for the benefit of the troops was ever refused in the history of the office. At and around Christmas, 1918, very numerous requests were received and all were granted. The 72nd Battalion got its Christmas Dinner provided. The 1st Canadian Hospital received Christmas presents for its patients. About 150,000 free Christmas Postcards were issued to the troops. Free feeds were given in all C. A. H. Huts and Centres.

In the month of January one million cigarettes were despatched through the office to Canadian Troops "for free distribution." Large quantities of "chewing gum" received through the courtesy of the Canadian Red Cross were sent out on the same conditions. A Chaplain writes:

*"The cigarettes you sent were simply the best thing you have ever done by way of getting us a good name. The men cannot understand our giving away Player's cigarettes. I make an issue every Sunday. Shall have enough for two more issues. We had a fine show last night."*

Meanwhile, a grant, covering half the cost of a Recreation Room at their London Barracks, was made to the Cana-

## Catholic Army Huts Activities

---

dian Army Service Corps and donations were sent to St. Dunstan's Hostel for the blind soldiers and the "Eccentric" Club for limbless soldiers.

It is said that figures talk. The following table, which is a summary of the official audits made by chartered accountants for the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, shows in English currency the details of all monies received and expended by the C. A. H. in Europe.

### FINANCIAL REPORT OF OVERSEAS DIRECTORS C. A. H.

OTTAWA, October 14, 1919.

Amount forwarded by Canadian Secretary-Treasurer, C. A. H. to Overseas Secretary-Treasurer, for work in England and France, from inception of work. June 1, 1917 to September 18, 1919 .....	£57,692	3	3.
Sales of Huts and equipment and refunds of unexpended balances of various C. A. Huts.....	7,404	8	2.
Gross receipts of Overseas Section C. A. H.....	65,096	11	5.
Gross Expenditure of Overseas Section from inception of work June 1, 1917 to Sept 18, 1919	61,106	12	9.
Balance on hand, Bank of Montreal, Waterloo Place, London, W. 1., Sept. 19, 1919.....	3,989	18	8.
	<b>£ 65,096</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.</b>

### CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENDITURES OVERSEAS

(A) Huts, tents, their equipment and maintenance.....	£ 50,531	14	3.
(B) Recreational supplies supplied to other military units than those which had C. A. Huts.....	5,806	0	2.
(C) Religious supplies supplied to other military units than those which had C. A. Huts....	2,384	11	10.
(D) Cables and postage principally for forwarding supplies and stationery to the troops...	304	1	6.
(E) Stationery (distributed free to troops).....	1,927	17	10.
(F) Headquarters Office, Express, Salaries and Transportation.....	252	7	2.
	<b>£ 61,106</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9.</b>

MAJOR, C. F.  
Overseas Secretary-Treasurer  
to December 30, 1918.

CAPT. C.F.  
Overseas Secretary-Treasurer  
December 30, 1918-Sept. 18, 1919.

All this business was handled by a staff of four and at a minimum expense to the public. It is worthy of note that the office expenditure at Headquarters for the whole period overseas was less than \$1,300.00. The activities indicated were kept up until the last possible moment and the office closed its doors with the consciousness of duty well done. At the conclusion of its activities, General Turner of Argyll House sent the following generous appreciation to the Secretary-Treasurer:

*"As the Canadian Forces will have all left England in the near future, I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you, on behalf of all members of the Canadian Forces, for the hospitality and help that they have received as a result of the efforts of the Catholic Army Huts in this direction."*

*"These Huts have done great work in London and throughout the United Kingdom in affording homes and comforts to our members and have played no small part in helping to maintain the smart soldierly appearance of our men while on leave, etc. and great praise is due to the Catholic Army Huts for the very efficient manner in which they have been conducted. Many of our members will carry back with them to Canada very pleasant memories of the hospitality and welcome received."*

It is a pleasure to chronicle this whole-hearted appreciation and to realize that the ideals and working of the C. A. H. were so acceptable to the hard-working and conscientious "G. O. C." of Canadians in England.

To this summing up we may well add that of the Canadian Secretary, C. A. H., written after reading the report of the K. of C. Overseas Commissioner in January, 1919:

*"It is a matter of considerable satisfaction to the home directorate, as it must be to all interested in the work of the Association, that Mr. Kernahan has been so favourably impressed with the splendid accomplishments of the Overseas officers and chaplains. Their record of service will go down in history as marking the capability, business sagacity and devotion to duty of a small but important body of Canadian priests, whose magnificent performance of service may yet mean more to the progress and security of Christianity and all it signifies in our Dominion, than much that has been gained by conquest of arms."*

## CHAPTER TEN

### CANADA'S WELCOME HOME

Up to the present the Catholic Army Huts organization had devoted its energies to aiding men to go to war and fight; now it was to turn its attention to the no less praiseworthy and patriotic work of assisting the returned veterans to readjust themselves to civil life and the things of peace. November 11th, 1918, opened a new chapter in C. A. H. activities.

How the Huts looked after the needs of the men during the days of demobilization has been dealt with in a previous chapter. Right up to the moment that Canada's soldier sons embarked for home, the Overseas Office was "on the job." Plentiful supplies of cigarettes, chewing gum, playing cards, etc., were on board every transport; at the Canadian Discharge Depot similar distributions were made before departure and a special representative of the C. A. H. journeyed to Liverpool with the troops in order to render all possible service to themselves and their families.

For the prompt return of her sons, Canada had to be completely reorganized from a military point of view. The speedy and efficient handling of hundreds of thousands of troops necessitated quick thinking and decisive action on the part of the Military Authorities. Dispersal areas were selected throughout the country and while documentation and kindred work was in progress in the huge Canadian Concentration Camps in England, demobilization plans were being made in Canada to ensure the prompt and satisfactory return of the men to their homes. This gave the Knights of Columbus their cue for their new rôle, namely, that of making the journeys of the war-worn soldiers as pleasant as possible.

The first step taken towards this end was the organization of Reception Committees throughout the Dominion to get in touch with the troops the moment they arrived and prove to them that there was something back of the

"Welcome" signs displayed in their honor. The organization was very similar at all points, consisting of energetic volunteers, many of them women, who became associated with the various Huts as soon as they were established and whose activities were financed from the funds of the Catholic Army Huts. Too much credit cannot be given to those who devoted themselves so unselfishly to these activities. It may be some recompense to them to know that their generous services have not been forgotten; even if history has no record of their names they are indelibly written in the grateful memories of the thousands to whom they ministered.

Meeting troops at the ports and again at various central railroad points on their homeward journeys, sounds prosaic enough when related in cold print; but in its actualities the work was full enough of incident and action to suit the most ardent devotee of adventure. "Waiting for a troop train" is a laconic phrase, only to be understood by those who have been through that interesting procedure. "Waiting" may indicate minutes officially and develop into hours of reality. The work had wonderful potentialities for the exercise of patience and endurance.

Day and night were one and the same thing to the military and, therefore, to the C. A. H. workers. The fact that trains reported for the evening did not arrive until the small hours of the following morning, meant nothing to them. Fog delayed incoming troopships and made the wharves even more bitterly raw than the average winter climate; but the work was carried on unflaggingly and uncomplainingly by hundreds of war-workers, members of the Order and their friends enrolled under the emblem of the Catholic Army Huts. The authorities were quick to realize the genuine good work being carried on by the Committees and were consequently prompt in lending their assistance. Letters in the records of the C. A. H. bear ample testimony to this fact, while the gratitude of the men themselves was sterling proof of their appreciation of the efforts of the workers.

While the C. A. H. was organized to minister to the material, intellectual and spiritual needs of Canada's soldiers yet, on the return of the forces it was found, as a very large percentage of the men were either accompanied or immediately followed by their wives and families who were almost invariably in need of the small comforts of life, that it was necessary to widen the scope of the work so as to include these dependents. Other organizations, for this specific purpose, did first class work; but the field was so large that hundreds of soldiers' wives and little ones in Canada to-day, who might otherwise have been overlooked on their homeward journeys, can gratefully recall the kindly ministrations of the C. A. H. Reception Committees. Special supplies were furnished for this kind of work and every effort was made to be of real assistance and it may be safely said that the women were no less grateful than their husbands.

The initial scenes of Knights of Columbus activities in welcoming the returning troops were obviously staged in the Atlantic Ports, as during the winter months all transports docked there for disembarkation purposes. The St. Lawrence River only opened for navigation to Quebec and Montreal in the late spring. **Halifax** can probably claim first honours as to the initiation of Knights of Columbus' war work in Canada; for it was there that the earliest start in welcoming troops returning from the front was made. As early as November, 1916, the Citizens' Returned Soldiers' Committee was formed by Halifax citizens to meet the incoming Hospital Ships, laden with the first to return of Canada's long list of casualties.

The greatness of the enterprise was fully realized and, in implicit faith in the old adage that "union is strength," all organizations joined forces and formed strong committees and teams, regardless of creed or social interests; with the result that when demobilization set in, pouring its khaki-clad torrents into the great hoppermouth of the Dominion's demobilization machine, all was in readi-

ness and willing hands available to help the returning troops.

At the outset of demobilization, late in 1918, a Pier Committee was formed from the Citizens' Committee, with a Knight of Columbus as Chairman and composed of both Knights of Columbus and members of other organizations. Eight teams were organized, composed of twelve men each, four Knights of Columbus being included on each team and of these teams, one or more was on duty to meet the incoming troopships. The number of teams, naturally, varied according to the number of men to be disembarked. The work done by this body called for considerable expenditure and in order to bear an equal share, in common with other organizations with which they were co-operating, the Knights of Columbus contributed \$9,000.00 from the C. A. H. funds.

The work in Halifax may be looked on as divided into two phases, namely, receiving the troops off the transports and seeing them embarked on the troop trains for their many and varied destinations in Canada. As soon as the ships came in, newspapers from the principal Canadian cities were distributed and letters and telegrams collected for despatch, gratis, while hot drinks, sandwiches and cake were also distributed. At the trains each man was systematically provided with a supply of "comforts" for the long journey westward, including cigarettes, matches, fruit, chocolate and a welcome card from the Committee giving the names of the various bodies identified with this work. A K. of C. card was also distributed, giving the location of the various Catholic Army Huts in Canada. The reader will readily appreciate the task devolving on the Halifax Reception Committee from the official figures which show that 262,515 soldiers and thousands of their dependents landed at this port between August, 1917 and December, 1919.

Another point of great activity in the Knights' arrangements for welcoming our returning soldiers, was St. John, N. B. A large number of the transports and hospi-



1. K. of C. Hut, Quebec City, Que.
2. K. of C. Hut, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
3. Dining room K. of C. Hut, Montreal, Que.
4. Gymnasium K. of C. Hut, St. John, N.B.
5. K. of C. Hut, Halifax, N.S.



## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

tal ships, as well as the vessels carrying soldiers' dependents were routed to this port and the winter of 1918-1919 saw scenes of the greatest activity at the docks, both day and night. The local G. W. V. A. band was engaged to welcome all troops arriving by train at the railway station, which was also served by the reception committee.

Apart from the men themselves, the women and children, weary from the long sea voyage, presented a further field for patriotic service. In most cases, their passages had been bespoken months ahead of time and their sailings had taken place on a bare few days' notice. After a hurried railway journey in Great Britain and a none too pleasant crossing, they had completed the first leg of the long journey towards their homes in Canada. Many of them were strangers to the country and more than a little bewildered at the newness of the surroundings, while all appreciated a helping hand during the busy hours of disembarkation and entrainment. There are thousands of women in Canada to-day, who were looked after by the Catholic Army Huts Reception Committees in St. John, who gratefully recall the services of those devoted women who gave their time to the care of the wives and little ones of those whose names are written in the records of the Overseas Military Forces of Canada.

The soldiers themselves were looked after on disembarkation at St. John, by a system similar to that employed at other points and even in the first excitement of seeing their homeland after many years of absence, the "comforts" distributed among them were welcome and the services of the workers none the less so. For the greater efficiency of the work of the Committees, a complete and modern canteen was installed at the docks during the initial stages of demobilization, with all the appliances necessary for supplying hot drinks and light refreshments for distribution among the troops and their dependents by the volunteer workers. Everything at the canteen was free of charge and plentifully supplied and in addition to eatables and "smokes", stationery was

provided and the men's letters, postcards and telegrams despatched for them free of charge. According to official records, 21,999 men and thousands of dependents were disembarked at the Port of St. John, between the fall of 1917 and December, 1919.

Across the international boundary, at **Portland, Me.**, the same class of work was done by American K. of C. war-workers for Canadian "casualties" who were being returned to Canada for treatment. Arrivals at this port were met by the Secretary and staff of the K. of C. War Activities Hut at Fort Williams, Me., who journeyed specially to Portland to meet each hospital ship and distributed Canadian newspapers and cigarettes among the boys. The "smokes" were usually distributed broadcast, being thrown on board the ships as soon as they came in and handed to the "stretcher cases", when they were landed. Some 8,343 wounded were returned to Canada through this port.

This co-operation by American members of the Order, for the benefit of Canadian troops, was a striking example of the international character of the organization and was much appreciated by those who found their journey to the hospitals in Canada routed via the United States.

**Prince Edward Island**, in spite of its geographical situation, was by no means isolated in so far as the work of the Catholic Army Huts was concerned. A Reception Committee was put into operation in connection with the Charlottetown Hut and did much good work throughout the demobilization period among the detachments of men who returned to the Island. The Provincial Government was prevailed upon to banquet the veterans immediately on arrival and these functions, naturally, became a feature of the reception programme.

The crossing from the mainland to the Island presented an opportunity for service which was readily developed by the Knights of Columbus. Arrangements were made to meet all bodies of returning men at **Fredericton, N.B.** and to provide generous supplies of "smokes" and

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

"comforts" for them on the boats. In Charlottetown, itself, teams were organized to meet all these bodies, conduct the men to the Hut and to look after those who were on their way to other P. E. I. points. The League of the Cross band volunteered its services and was always on hand to furnish music for the march from the pier to the demobilization station. While there was not the same field for Reception Committee work here as at mainland railroad and disembarkation points, the Knights, nevertheless, did all in their power to welcome the men and their families.

The coming of the summer months made a very perceptible change in the military disembarkation programme by the opening of the St Lawrence River for navigation, thereby shifting the scene of action from the Atlantic coast ports. This change practically doubled the work to be done at Quebec and Montreal, where Committees had been busy all during the winter season, looking after trainloads of men from the Atlantic seaboard, bound for Western destinations; the advent of the warm weather called for activity at the docks as well as at the railroad yards.

At **Quebec**, as at Halifax, the arriving troops were looked after by a Committee of the citizens, embracing all the various local patriotic organizations and financed from a common fund. The Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts contributed \$10,000.00 for Reception Committee work alone, bearing their share of the expenses in common with other organizations with which they were co-operating.

The reception committees found their task such a heavy one that a special canteen car was installed at Levis railway station during the winter months and shunted round as required to accommodate the different troop trains. By this means, hot drinks and light refreshments were made readily available for the soldier travellers during their stop at this important divisional point, through which practically all the Canadian forces

passed en route to their destinations farther West. Similar work was done at the docks during the navigation seasons, 29,275 men being disembarked at this port from 1917 to 1919 inclusive. Here, as at other points the Knights of Columbus distributed their cards, giving the location of the Catholic Army Huts throughout Canada and inviting the men to make free use of them.

Its unique position on the Dominion's railroads made **Montreal** the most important pulse on the transportation of returning troops and the Knights of Columbus were consequently called on to initiate their activities in Reception Committee work on a very large scale almost coincident with the arrival of the first troopships from across the Atlantic. All troop trains from the Atlantic Coast passed through Montreal. Hundreds of thousands of men and their families passed through this point for the West, in addition to the 47,204 actually demobilized in Military District No. 4 (Montreal) and the 5,380 who landed from the transports at the harbour. It may well be imagined that all this meant much work for the organization whose chosen motto was "Everything for the Returned man."

How groups of energetic volunteers, aided by the local staff of the Catholic Army Huts, tended the many troop trains which fell to their share, is a story which is too long to write in detail. Suffice to say that their duties took the members of the Committees to the railroad yards at all hours of day and night, in all kinds of weather, on errands varying from the meeting of a single train carrying a few hundred "details," to looking after two or three battalions at a time, in trains covering practically all the available switch space.

In many instances the arrivals and departures of the trains carrying troops from a single transport would cover many hours. Schedules were often hopelessly disarranged, in spite of the efforts of the railroad and military authorities, with the result that what promised to be a three-hour job often developed into a half day, or more often a whole

night, on duty. The work was only considered complete, however, when the last train on each Committee's list had been met and dealt with and the many long hours spent in waiting were gladly devoted to the services of those whose own service had been measured in years overseas.

Apart from the welcoming of Canadian troops, the Committees were called on to look after parties of Imperial soldiers returning from the East, via Canada, and also welcomed the visiting crew of H. M. S. "Renown" on their arrival in Montreal during their sight-seeing tour of Eastern Canada, on the occasion of the visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to the Dominion in 1919.

At the docks, as at the trains, the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts' workers were untiring in their efforts to make the men and their families feel that they were indeed welcome on their return to Canada. The meeting of the numerous ships which docked at the harbour covered the entire navigation season of 1919, the major portion of these activities being during the earlier of the summer months.

The return of the various local units afforded opportunities to the K. of C. to put forth a special effort. This was notably the case on the arrival of the famous 22nd (French-Canadian) Battalion, in May, 1919, when a reception held in the concert-hall of Lafontaine Council proved to be one of the best entertainments of its kind in the war history of the city.

Service men returning to Canada's Capital city, were met, on the arrival of each train, by a Committee of Catholic Army Huts workers composed of members of the Order from the various **Ottawa** Councils and their every need attended to. A strong Committee of ladies was prominent in this branch of the activities, both at the railway station and in the Hut itself, preparing for the incoming troops. All arrangements for the provision of extra meals, at irregular hours, were completed prior to the arrival of

the trains, so that as soon as the men reached the Hut everything was ready for them.

Automobiles, generously volunteered by members of the Order, proved invaluable in the work of welcoming the men. As soon as the formalities at the station were over, the men were taken to the Hut, or whatever other points they might wish to be driven to in the city. The Committee, whose workers had been looking after the men from the moment the trains pulled in to the station, had other members on hand at the Hut to assist the men in making such transportation arrangements as might be necessary and to aid the Secretary and his staff in generally looking after the new arrivals. On several occasions, following the arrival of a detachment of troops, evening entertainments were held in the Hut. These performances by local amateurs were invariably appreciated by the soldier audiences.

An energetic group of members of the Order formed the Reception Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in **Kingston**, Ontario, and were kept fully occupied throughout the period of the dispersal of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, looking after the troops returning to and passing through the city. To facilitate the arrangements, a representative of the Committee would journey to Brockville whenever a large party of troops were expected and there board the train, thus becoming acquainted with a considerable proportion of the men and familiarizing himself with their various little difficulties before reaching Kingston. An adequate supply of smokes, etc., was distributed on each occasion.

On arrival in the city the men were taken in hand by C. A. H. workers, as soon as the formalities permitted and entertained at the Hut or despatched to their respective homes. Through trains were handled as at other points by being provisioned with K. of C. supplies and the men's mail and telegrams were collected and despatched for them.

The return of the 21st Battalion, raised in and around Kingston, was an occasion of great festivity. The

C. A. H. Committee did its full share on this occasion, not only in the making of the preliminary arrangements and the care of the men on their arrival, but also at the banquet which was tendered to the local soldiers. One hundred men were waited on at this function by members of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Catholic Army Hut.

Always a busy spot on the K. of C. map, **Toronto** did its reception work in the same efficient manner that it carried out all its other activities for returned soldiers. The people as a whole turned out just as enthusiastically to welcome the men home, as they did in the early days of the war to cheer them on their way to fight. The Knights of Columbus were well to the fore and took part in every branch of the work of looking after the troops.

Probably the most outstanding feature of the soldiers' welcome to the Queen City, was the organization of volunteer automobile transportation for the men to all parts of the City. The Knights went right into this work and cars belonging to members of the local Council, often driven by their owners, met every detachment of troops arriving for dispersal.

North Toronto Station and the Exhibition Grounds both became well known centres of activity for the Volunteer Committees, regardless of racial and religious differences. The quiet efficiency of the whole dispersal system in Toronto will be long and gratefully remembered by the troops. The official proceedings were brief and complete and the men, with their first gratuity cheques and their railway warrants in their pockets, were sent homewards long before they had hoped to be clear of the official routine. Once clear of the military authorities, the troops were taken in hand by the citizens in a no less efficient manner, looked after in every way and taken by auto to whatever destination they might name in and around the city, or to the Catholic Army Hut and similar institutions if they happened to be strangers.

The return of Queen City units and battalions of the vicinity, called for redoubled action on the part of the

Reception Committees, who did much to make the newly arrived troops comfortable. Apart from the work done during the actual demobilization days, Toronto Council of the Knights of Columbus was keenly interested in the welfare of the local troops from the earliest days of the war. Through the courtesy of the Military authorities the Knights were granted the use of a small permanent building in the Exhibition Grounds and this was operated as a recreation centre while the troops were in training.

Many men who trained in Toronto will pleasantly recall the occasions on which Toronto Council invited them to smoking concerts in the Council building on Sherbourne Street. These events were organized by the members of the Council to give the boys a "send off" on the eve of departure for overseas, when the hall was invariably taxed to capacity.

That the K. of C. are ever ready to recognize the debt we owe our country's defenders, was strikingly evidenced through an incident associated with the Toronto Exhibition of 1920. Victoria Cross holders from various points in Canada and the United States had been invited to attend the Exhibition, the military authorities providing for their transportation; but the plans made for the housing of these veterans during their stay in Toronto miscarried. At this somewhat trying moment, the Chairman of Toronto's C. A. H. Committee undertook to make provision for these gallant men. Reservations were made at three of Toronto's leading hotels and notwithstanding the fact that accommodation was at a premium, owing to the crowds visiting the city, some forty-two of these guests were able to enjoy for one week all the comforts of a modern hotel, with the C. A. H. as hosts.

The K. of C. also extended the privileges of their club house to wearers of the V. C. and to round off a week of enjoyment took their honoured guests to view a high-class performance at Toronto's principal theatre. That the hospitality of the Knights was fully appreciated by their V. C. guests, is evident from a resolution passed by the



1. Exterior view K. of C. Hut, Ottawa, Ont.
2. Dining room of K. of C. Hut, Kingston, Ont.
3. Writing room of K. of C. Hut, Toronto, Ont.
4. Amusement Hall of K. of C. Hut, London, Ont.
5. Dormitory of K. of C. Hut, Hamilton Ont.



visitors on the eve of their departure for their homes, copy of which is to be found elsewhere in these pages.

Troop trains arriving at and passing through **Hamilton**, Ont., were invariably met by the Reception Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, which was so organized as to be able to cope with any eventuality which might arise. The fact that the fifty odd patriotic citizens who volunteered their services for the welcoming of the returning soldiery owned their own cars was a great asset to the Committee as a whole. A fleet of automobiles, bearing the pennant of the Catholic Army Huts, was always to be seen headed stationwards on the arrival of a troop train being signalled. The cars were not only most useful for the handling of the men and their kits, but also for the transportation of supplies, of which ample stocks were constantly maintained at the railway stations.

Through trains were adequately rationed with cigarettes, chocolate, newspapers and periodicals and other small donations; while the men whose final destination was reached on arrival at Hamilton, were at once taken in hand by the Knights' Reception Committee. After the completion of any necessary military formalities, the soldiers were taken by automobile to the Hut, their homes or whatever points they designated in and around the City.

Men temporarily detained at the railroad station or dispersal centre were cared for by special parties of workers, whose charge was to see that their hours of waiting were made as pleasant as possible for them. Every convenience was placed at the men's disposal. Letters and telegrams were despatched free of charge and the workers, individually and collectively, made every effort to be of service to the soldiers. Thus the activities of the Committee were carried on at all hours of the day and night throughout the busy times of demobilization. The men and women whose services made it possible to

accomplish the vast amount of good done, deserve far more credit that can be given them here. The men benefited by the C. A. H. efforts will always remember them and this, in itself, constitutes more sincere appreciation than can be expressed in words.

Fate and the powers that be seem to have arranged matters so that soldiers returning to **London**, Ont., generally reached their destination about midnight; but this inconvenient fact in no way lessened the ardour of the members of the Reception Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts.

The demobilization arrangements at Carlings Heights were excellent and the men were so rapidly handled that they were ready for C. A. H. hospitality in a surprisingly short time after their arrival. The matter of getting them to the Richmond Street Hut in the wee sma' hours of the morning presented a serious problem which, however, was promptly solved by the generous co-operation of the local military authorities in supplying lorries for their transportation. Arrived at the Hut, the soldiers were looked after by the staff, their kits checked, meals served to them and beds provided. The depositing of their valuables in the office and the answering of their many and varied enquiries also formed no mean part of the work. The Catholic Army Hut was invariably the chosen lodging place of a very considerable percentage of the arrivals on each occasion.

It is pleasing to note that at this important demobilization point, in particular, every form of assistance was readily rendered to the Catholic Army Huts, both by the authorities, and those bodies engaged in kindred work. The staff at Carlings Heights were most courteous and obliging to C. A. H. workers and co-operated in every possible way. The best of relations were maintained at all times, with the common end—the soldier—always in view.

Supplies were plentiful and the workers unceasing in their endeavours to maintain a good record for the Com-

mittee, while at the Hut the staff worked at all hours of day and night to make the men comfortable. Demobilization days were strenuous times in London, Ont.; but all pulling together, the 20,000 troops dispersed at this point were at all times well cared for from the first moment of their arrival.

**Winnipeg**, which may be aptly termed the "half-way house" between the Atlantic and Pacific, was naturally a very important centre for the Catholic Army Huts, being not only a dispersal station in itself, but a point through which thousands of troops passed on their way to the Prairie Provinces and British Columbia. An energetic Reception Committee was in attendance on the arrival of troop trains, who saw to it that the men going through to Western destinations had sufficient in the way of cigarettes, games and "comforts" generally to last them until their next important stopping place. Troops for demobilization in Winnipeg were immediately taken in charge by the workers and conducted to the Hut, or set on the right road to their respective individual destinations in the City.

Here, as elsewhere, in addition to their activities among the soldiers, the C. A. H. frequently came in touch with large numbers of dependents. The women and children were always well cared for and every possible assistance rendered them. An excellent example of this occurred one memorable Sunday, when a trainload of returning men and their wives and families were scheduled to arrive between midnight and one o'clock in the morning, which information was telephoned to the local Secretary at the Catholic Army Hut at about 11 p.m. This was short notice indeed; but in a surprisingly short space of time various hotels had been communicated with for accommodation and arrangements made at the Hut to take in men to capacity, a hot meal waiting for them on arrival. A fleet of taxicabs was requisitioned and when the train pulled in all single men who could be accommodated were whirled off to the Hut, bag and baggage; while

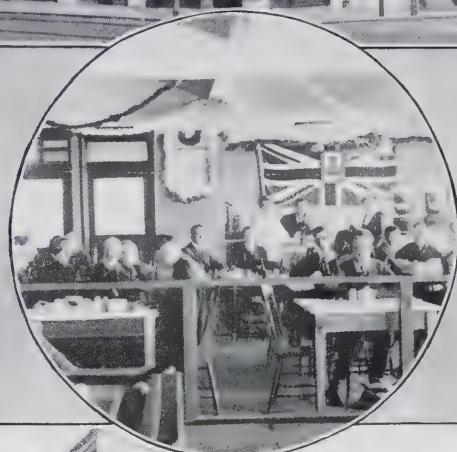
those with dependents were sent either to their homes in the City or to hotels at which rooms had been reserved for them.

**Brandon**, while not so important a centre in the official demobilization scheme as Winnipeg, established a very good record of work. Local units were well looked after and small drafts of individual men returning to the vicinity were welcomed with an enthusiasm and efficiency every bit as great as that shown in the busier sections of the country. The Committee in connection with the local Catholic Army Hut, as well as the Hut itself, did all that was possible to make the homecoming troops welcome; the hostel being not infrequently filled to capacity.

In **Saskatoon**, the local Council of the Order gave every assistance to the Committee of the Catholic Army Huts in the meeting of returning men and troops passing through the city. The incoming trains were met by K. of C. workers and taken to the Hut for refreshment and generally looked after. Volunteer workers, including many ladies, co-operated most heartily in this and other branches of the activities at this point.

As explained elsewhere in these pages, **Revelstoke, B.C.**, though originally included in the Dominion Demobilization plans as a dispersal centre, only handled a very limited number of soldiers on their return to Canada. These troops were mostly men whose homes were in the immediate neighbourhood. They were accorded a very hearty welcome, representatives of the Catholic Army Huts being on hand to offer them hospitality and comforts and to assist them in every possible way.

**Vancouver, B.C.**, was somewhat peculiarly situated as regards its Reception Committee activities of Catholic Army Huts work. The Pacific Coast was, so to speak, "the end of the line" for Canada's returning troops. There were a few cases of men passing through Vancouver to other British Columbia points; but, in the main, most of the men arriving in the city either had their homes there or intended to make it their headquarters on demobilization.



1. K. of C. Hut at Brandon, Manitoba.

2. Dining room of K. of C. Hut at Saskatoon, Sask.

3. K. of C. Hut at Winnipeg, Manitoba.



The work of making the troops welcome, was, however, carried on with the same enthusiasm as at the other important centres throughout the Dominion. The local Committee, organized at a very early date, met all trains on their arrival, and the personnel made it their business to be of assistance to the soldiers in every possible way. Men were taken to the Hut, or to whatever other destinations they might have in town; their kits were looked after and their affairs were generally attended to, so that the first hours of their homecoming might be absolutely carefree. At the Hut, all facilities were placed at the disposal of the arrivals. The Secretary and staff co-operated in rendering service to the men in locating their relatives, making their train arrangements when necessary, looking after their valuables and mail and generally making them feel at home.

Beds, meals and baths were always in demand on the arrival of a detachment of troops and, as at the Huts in other cities, were gladly furnished free of charge to the newcomers. Soldiers and sailors individually and collectively were always made welcome and though the transient traffic was slight, Vancouver's C. A. H. Reception Committee has a fine record of service to its credit.

It was a long and tedious journey to **Victoria, B.C.**, for men demobilized there; but it may be safely said that the long days in the troop trains only added to the satisfaction of the soldiers in finally reaching their dispersal point. Home, for many of them, meant the City itself; while the remainder felt that at last they were at least within hailing distance of their various places of residence on the Island.

The Catholic Army Huts spared no pains to make their welcome in Victoria a real one. A strong Committee had charge of this particular branch of the activities during the entire duration of the time of demobilization. The men were met, furnished with all kinds of "comforts", offered the hospitality of the Hut and advised in the many little problems which arose on the final severing of the

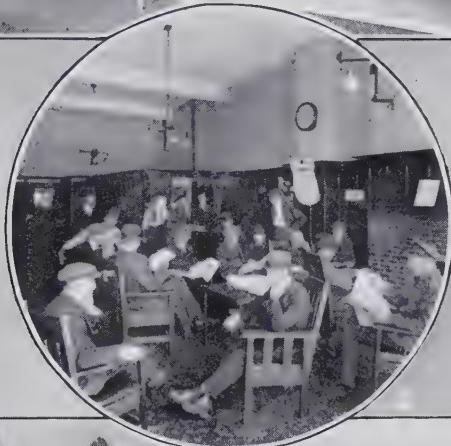
ties with military authority. It was only natural, here as elsewhere, that men who had for years been under efficient administration, with everything planned and prescribed for them, should feel a certain awkwardness in fending for themselves during the first few days of their return to the long-forgotten civilian life.

Hundreds of veterans were accommodated at the Fort Street Hut, where the Secretary and his staff were always at their service and many, passing a few days in the city prior to returning to out-of-town points, made it their permanent headquarters.

The generosity of the Knights was not solely confined to the service of the returned men themselves for, at Christmas, when a wave of unemployment made the outlook a dreary one for many an ex-soldier's family, the Catholic Army Huts took practical means to assist the luckless dependents.

A number of cases, where help from other sources did not seem to be forthcoming, were investigated by the Committee and hampers sent to the needy homes for Christmas Day. These very welcome gifts prepared, in a number of cases, by volunteer workers of the Catholic Army Huts, were distributed among some forty soldiers' families.

In the late Fall of 1919, H. M. S. New Zealand visited the harbour and the Knights of Columbus immediately arranged to entertain the men at a smoking concert. At the last moment, however, sailing orders resulted in a curtailment of shore leave and the plan had to be rapidly readjusted. With the co-operation of the authorities, some nine hundred men were welcomed by the Knights and taken uptown to a theatre where a pleasant afternoon was spent. The liberty party was divided into squads, guides were allotted to each and the men shown whatever was possible in the city, on their way to and from the entertainment. Each sailor was also supplied with a package of cigarettes, chocolate bars and car-tickets, in addition to his ticket for the theatre performance.



1. Dormitory of K. of C. Hut, Vancouver, B.C.

2. Reading room of K. of C. Hut, Victoria, B.C.

3. Reception to the boys by the K. of C. at Revelstoke, B.C.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE WORK IN ALBERTA.

THE Executive of the Catholic Army Huts, ever conscious of the responsibility of administering a trust fund raised for the benefit of the members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and contributed by Canadians in all walks of life, at all times carefully scrutinized proposed fields of activity before entering therein.

A direct result of this policy was the fact that Huts were not opened in the Province of Alberta coincident with their establishment in all the other Provinces of the Dominion.

The prime reason for this was the report of responsible officers of the Knights of Columbus in Alberta, who stated that hostels were not a necessity and that their operation there would give rise to a certain amount of overlapping in activities on behalf of returned men, as the G. W. V. A. and kindred organizations had already opened or contemplated opening clubs in the principal centres of the Province. These clubs were adequately equipped with dining and sleeping quarters. This viewpoint was supported by the authoritites of the Provincial Government and officers of the Military Districts concerned, as well as by a number of other well briefed people taken into consultation on this important matter. These opinions were also influenced by the fact that a large proportion of the men whose homes were in Alberta, were being demobilized at Winnipeg and intermediate points and the need of hostel accommodation to care for them during the early days of their discharge was not as urgent as at points where large bodies of troops were undergoing dispersal. It was therefore decided to undertake all phases of C. A. H. activity with the exception of Hut work. The work among the sick and wounded in the hospitals and the fullest co-operation with other organizations for the benefit of returned soldiers and sailors, were extensively conducted and are specially dealt with elsewhere in this book.

From the start made by the welcoming of troop trains during the early days of demobilization, the activities developed steadily, until it became evident that there was a very wide field for practical assistance for the veterans and that a very genuine service could be rendered to those who had themselves served so well by establishing a system whereby they might find assistance in the solution of their various problems, whether of a military, semi-military or civilian nature.

To accomplish this, a second thorough survey was made of the Province, and in the autumn of 1919, offices were opened in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. In each case, a Secretary was installed (a returned man being found for the post) and the necessary office staff recruited from the unemployed veterans of the various cities. This Secretary was in turn governed by the local Committee of the Catholic Army Huts, presided over by a carefully chosen chairman. The closest liaison was at all times maintained between the Alberta offices themselves and also with the Comptroller's Office in Montreal. Help for the men in their correspondence and temporary difficulties with various Government Departments and also the all-important problem of unemployment, were very thoroughly gone into and in view of the peculiar local conditions, the arrangements for monetary help for the men were made somewhat more elastic than at other points throughout the country.

Provision was made for the making of small advances to men in needy circumstances, or in cases where veterans were in need of ready cash to aid them in civilian re-establishment. In many cases, these advances were guaranteed by the men to whom they were made by moneys due them on account of Pension or War Service Gratuity. Special arrangements were naturally made in these instances and the assistance and co-operation of various departments of the Federal and Provincial Governments are worthy of the highest praise.

To enter fully into the details of each case of the four Offices would take more space than is available for the purpose; but the following brief summaries will serve to show by concrete examples, just how the Catholic Army Huts Offices in Alberta were operated.

**Edmonton.** The Capital City of the Province of Alberta was naturally a point at which a considerable proportion of the troops demobilized in that section of the Dominion centred for their re-establishment in civilian life. This state of affairs existed from the earliest dispersal days and later, when depression set in, the city held out hopes, often forlorn enough it is true, to those who had failed to find the answer to the problem of getting a livelihood elsewhere throughout the rural districts. These facts made the field of opportunity for practical assistance for returned men a very fertile one and the office of the Catholic Army Huts in the C. P. R. block became a scene of ceaseless activity in Edmonton's post-war life.

When originally opened in the autumn of 1919, the office of the C. A. H. was located at 10129 Jasper Avenue; but after a few months it was moved to the C. P. R. Block. The change caused no interruption in the work and the Secretary and his staff, veterans themselves, were kept constantly busy with the affairs of hundreds of returned men from our own and Allied armies, whose needs covered almost every imaginable form of post-discharge difficulty. Times were undoubtedly busy for the K. of C. in Edmonton; but thanks to a hard-working and efficient Secretary, the office was at all times able to keep abreast of the work and to establish a fine record for itself, both at C. A. H. headquarters, and among the men themselves.

Space does not permit of an elaborate survey of the work accomplished through this office. Reference is, therefore, only made to a few of the various classes of cases dealt with.

The closest possible co-operation with men in difficulties in regard to Pension, War Service Gratuity, Post

Discharge Pay, etc., was always maintained and thus it was in October, 1919, a few weeks after the opening of the office, the Secretary spent a busy morning with members of the Board of Pension Commissioners for Canada, then on an official tour of the West. He took advantage of the occasion to take up with these highest Pension authorities, a number of cases which had been referred to him by the soldiers interested, with the result that, in many instances, satisfactory adjustments were effected. Pension and War Service Gratuity papers were filled out and certified in the office in large numbers.

Another outstanding case of practical work was that of a discharged soldier of the French Army who wished to take up farming under the Soldiers' Settlement Board. The Secretary personally accompanied this man to the Board's offices, filled out the necessary documents for him and sponsored his case till a favourable result was attained.

It is recorded that later in the office's activities, on a Saturday afternoon, August, 1920, the Secretary was notified that a returned man was under the influence of liquor and in very undesirable company. The C. A. H. Secretary located the soldier and found out that he had \$1,000.00 in his possession. He was finally persuaded to hand over half of the money for safe-keeping on the Saturday night and the Secretary called on him early on Sunday and obtained the balance from him. The complete sum was handed back to the veteran on Monday morning, when his gratitude knew no bounds; as the money was intended for the closing of an important deal on a farm property. This transaction was later successfully concluded.

Financial assistance to deserving cases, following due investigation, was also one of the major activities of the Edmonton office of the Catholic Army Huts and the following instances will serve to show the type of cases which came to the K. of C. for assistance and to whom help was given.

A veteran of the Great War, sixty-three years of age, applied for the loan of \$100.00 to go into the cabinet-making business. The money was required for the purchase of tools and was readily advanced as soon as the genuineness of the case had been established. A discharged sailor of the Royal Naval Canadian Volunteer Reserve, who had been studying law prior to joining up and on his return, ran short of funds. He was unable to pursue his studies until he was advanced \$200.00 by the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts to defray his law school fees. A discharged non-commissioned officer of the Canadian Army Medical Corps was advance \$200.00 to set himself up as a mechano-therapist in Edmonton and a discharged R. A. F. man was given \$250.00 to enter the gas tractor business. With the idea of opening a barber shop, two veterans applied for a loan of \$220.00 each, which was granted. Yet another man made a start in the window-cleaning business with a \$100. advance, made a success of it and was able to employ several men later sent him from the C. A. H. office.

The following are outstanding even among the more noticeable cases of the Edmonton Office: A soldier settler in the neighbourhood of Edmonton found that his farm while enabling him to carry on work as a missionary, was not a lucrative enough investment to enable him to finish an Arts' course which he was following at the University of Alberta. He applied to the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, explaining that he was a minister, and setting forth the circumstances of his case and a loan of \$225.00 was made to him. He completed his course and repaid his advance in full.

In the late fall of 1920, a soldier applied at the office for an advance of \$250.00. He had a contract to cut cordwood during the winter months and had money due him from a threshing contract. In the meantime, he needed money to board his woodcutters. The loan was made and he engaged ten fellow-returned men for the job.

A particularly pathetic case was that of a discharged enlisted man of the U. S. Engineer Corps. He had been badly injured during the war and it had become evident that his only chance for life was to proceed to Rochester, Minnesota, to be operated on by a famous specialist. He was without means and the Catholic Army Huts donated \$300.00 to defray his expenses. In spite of the operation, however, the soldier died in Rochester.

One of the largest sums advanced in the history of the office, was a loan of \$600.00 made to a well-qualified electrical mechanic who wished to go into business for himself. This substantial assistance enabled the soldier in question to open an electrical repair shop in Edmonton, which proved to be the complete solution of the question of his re-instatement in civilian life.

And so the business of helping those who were endeavouring to help themselves continued. It would take too long and occupy too much space to cite further instances of the activities of the K. of C. Catholic Army Huts in this particular line. The help given was undoubtedly much appreciated and it may be sincerely said that it was just as willingly granted.

The employment question was naturally a very serious one, and the C. A. H. did all that was possible to bear a share in this, the Nation's greatest responsibility—the finding of jobs for the returned men. It speaks eloquently of the confidence which was inspired by the Edmonton Office of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts that within a few weeks of its opening, the Provincial Department of Education called on the Secretary to find a man to fill a \$1,500.00 job in its offices, and a well-known Western corporation asked for suitable employees on more than one occasion. In all, upwards of four hundred men were placed.

The Secretary made it his business to keep in the closest touch with the Provincial Government's Director of Labour and with all the organizations in the vicinity which

were interested in finding positions for the veterans of the Great War.

One of the last undertakings of the Office, prior to its closing in the spring of 1921, was the care by the Secretary through personal visits, of some thirty-five cases of acute distress and sickness. In each case the necessary assistance was provided and in three instances, where both husband and wife were ill, nurses were placed in charge. In one house it was necessary to obtain bed and bedding, as there was practically nothing in the place. It is to the very great credit of the local G. W. V. A. that all that was necessary was promptly loaned from their dormitory.

Complete and practical co-operation was at all times maintained with the various returned men's organizations. This, naturally, made things much simpler for all concerned and prevented overlapping. The Catholic Army Huts were well represented in all local post-war activities and took their full share in the events of the demobilization period and of the somewhat trying times which followed.

It would be an injustice to close this Office's all too brief story without a word of tribute to the Secretary. An ex-officer of the Canadian Forces himself, he knew the soldier and the soldier's way and possessed the happy faculty of inspiring confidence in all whose privilege it was to be associated with him. He was equally popular with the returned soldier and the C. A. H. Committee and the marked success of the activities in Edmonton was in no small measure due to his personality and devoted service. For the Office, the facts stand out of themselves as proofs of its accomplishments and it is with the greatest satisfaction that the returned men of the neighbourhood and the Canadian public in general may look back on the busy days of its operation.

**Calgary.** The activities of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in Calgary, Alberta, were directed from the Office which was opened in the autumn of 1919 at 704 Centre Street, a splendidly central location for the

work of the organization. Day after day, the Secretary and his assistants were kept fully occupied attending to the large number of returned men of the city and neighbourhood, who came in an endless stream with their individual problems and the records show a most varied tale of endeavour to be of assistance in almost every imaginable way.

Correspondence between the C. A. H. Office and the various departments of the Federal and Provincial Governments, naturally assumed large proportions; documents were filled out and certified for hundreds of men. In connection with claims for Pensions, War Service Gratuity, refund of passage moneys for dependents and so forth, the closest co-operation was constantly maintained with all other local organizations dealing with discharged soldiers and sailors and, in a word, the Catholic Army Huts left no stone unturned to be of practical assistance to the veterans.

Money matters, in this district as elsewhere, formed a very large portion of the soldiers' difficulties and the C. A. H. so arranged matters that it was possible to make advances and in many cases donations to cases in which assistance was really merited. These are far too numerous to go into in their entirety and the following have therefore been taken from the Office files to serve as examples of the various categories of need which the Catholic Army Huts deemed suitable for relief. The saying that "Heaven helps those who help themselves" was always borne in mind and it will be generally found that advances were made only to those with some really definite object in view and the character and ability to "make good", or to men whose circumstances were such as could only classify them in the terse term "up against it". The idea in every case was to "help" the soldier or sailor, not to take his responsibilities from him.

A striking case of complete co-operation between the man and the C. A. H. in every respect was that of a soldier who applied for and, after investigation was granted

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

a loan of \$500.00 to purchase a part interest in a billiard room. The money was advanced at the end of December, 1919; the man went into his new business with a will and in June, 1920, sold out at a profit of \$3,000.00 and repaid his indebtedness to the Catholic Army Huts.

In March, 1920, a discharged officer was given a cash advance of \$350.00 for the purpose of purchasing a growing law practice and providing himself with the necessary office and fixtures. A loan of \$100.00 was made a few months earlier to a soldier who, prior to the war, had been a practising barrister, for the purpose of re-establishing himself in his profession. He had been badly wounded and found himself in need of ready cash when the time came for him to get back into civil life. Both these cases justified themselves by successes.

A pathetic case was that of a returned officer who, after months of hospital treatment and a protracted term of convalescence, counted on being able to get back into civilian harness, only to find himself ordered off all work for a period of two months. During his long hospitalization, his household bills had been mounting up and the prospect of two months of enforced idleness was not a pleasant one. The C. A. H. made an advance of \$200.00 in this case to enable the unfortunate veteran to clear up his affairs.

A cure for the high cost of living suggested itself to one veteran, in the shape of increased revenue by starting a rooming house. His character was irreproachable and he frankly stated his case to the Secretary, pointing out his project. After due investigation, he was advanced \$200.00 for the initial payments on his venture. He has since "made good".

To have a good job and to be without the all-essential equipment for holding it, was the fate of a discharged soldier of the Canadian Army Medical Corps, who was appointed a government cattle inspector and then found that his work made the possession of a horse absolutely essential. He came and told his story at the Office and,

after the usual enquiries, was given \$100.00 to remedy his difficulty.

With nothing but hope left, a discharged soldier, who had joined up at the age of eighteen and married during the war, walked into the Office one morning in search of work and assistance. Enquiries into his case by the Secretary, elicited the fact that he was eligible for a course under the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment. Papers were at once filled which resulted in his obtaining six-months' instruction with pay and allowances. Pending the arrangement of the necessary details, he was advanced sufficient funds by the C. A. H. to pay for the board and lodging of his wife and himself.

Cases of necessity were invariably met with the prompt and practical co-operation of the Catholic Army Huts and the records of the Calgary Office show several advances made to men in domestic straits. One soldier and his wife, who had both been in and out of hospital for months with various infectious diseases, were given \$100.00 to tide things over during this trying time. Another man was advanced \$50.00 to pay the funeral expenses of his boy, while \$60.00 was devoted to the interment of another veteran's wife. Yet another discharged soldier was given \$25.00 to pay his wife's expenses while she was in hospital for an operation.

Discharged in 1918 as a casualty, a plucky soldier at once got work as a brakeman on one of the railroads; but his health gave out on account of the effects of having been gassed while on active service and he was obliged to return to hospital. After lengthy treatment, he was discharged and was given \$100.00 to "carry on" with.

As a final instance, the case may be cited of a returned man whose wife died suddenly while riding on a street car, leaving him with six children to look after. His story heard, he was granted \$100.00 to defray the funeral charges and provide subsistence for the family until he could get down to work.



1. J. H. O'Connor, Winnipeg, Man., *Director K. of C. C.A.H.* 1922.
2. L. V. O'Connor, Lindsay, Ont., *Director, Vice-President and member of Executive 1919-20.*
3. John J. Leddy, Saskatoon, Sask., *Director, Vice-President and member Executive K. of C. C.A.H., 1918-19-20, Supreme Director Knights of Columbus, 1919-20-21. Decorated by French Government Aug. 1920 an officer of Public Instruction.*
4. J. P. Foley, K.C., Winnipeg, Man., *Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1921.*





There are dozens of other cases of a more or less similar nature in the story of Calgary's activities under the emblem of the Catholic Army Huts; but space does not permit of their being dealt with here. The foregoing will have given the reader a very fair outline of the class of work undertaken during the period of the activities.

Apart from the work actually done in and through the office, the C. A. H. endeavoured to place themselves at the disposal of the various returned men's bodies whenever possible. Much of this class of work is dealt with in the chapter referring more particularly to the joint activities of the Knights of Columbus, the G. W. V. A. and kindred organizations and it is sufficient to say in passing, that the co-operation in Calgary was as complete as anywhere in the widespread activities of the Catholic Army Huts on behalf of the returned men.

**Lethbridge.** The certainty of efficient advice and assistance in their various difficulties and of sympathetic and courteous treatment, no matter what their individual troubles might be, soon led the ex-service men in Lethbridge, Alta. and its immediate neighbourhood, to look on the Office of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts as the logical place to which to take all the problems with which they and their families found themselves faced during the months following their demobilization. This, naturally, made busy days for the C. A. H. Secretary and his assistants in their quarters in the G. W. V. A. Clubhouse.

Financial assistance soon became an outstanding feature of the work; more especially during the difficult winter periods when many men, through no particular fault of their own, found themselves out of work. Hundreds of dollars were devoted to the assistance of the needy by way of cash advances. In cases where the applicant for help was not likely to be in a position to make repayment, money was given as a donation. No genuine case of distress was ever allowed to go unalleviated. In adopting this policy, the Catholic Army Huts were confident that

the purposes to which these moneys were devoted were precisely those which the subscribers of the Catholic Army Huts Fund would have themselves endorsed, both individually and collectively, had they been conversant with the circumstances of the individual cases.

There were many cases of financial assistance to returned men and the following, picked at random, will give a fair impression of the class of work which was conducted in this particular line.

Out of hospital, minus a leg and with nothing ahead of him except the money due from the Government, a soldier dropped in in the early days of the Office's operation to tell his tale to the Secretary. On due investigation of his affairs, the sum of twenty-five dollars was advanced for his immediate needs. Another man, out of work for some time, found himself faced with the proposition of having his wife ill in hospital and being left with a family to look after and no visible means of so doing. The Catholic Army Huts made an immediate advance of fifty dollars with a view to materially helping him. There were many such cases of families dependent on men who could not obtain work and were therefore unable to support them and in every deserving case where the help was really needed, the C. A. H. stepped into the breach and saw the veteran and his dear ones out of the wood.

In making loans, the policy was to help the men to help themselves, as in the case of a teamster who owned four teams and had secured work at an outside point, but had no means of getting his outfit shipped to the job. Money advanced by the C. A. H. proved to be the solution of this difficulty. In another case, a young man taking a course in mineralogy, was given an advance to buy instruments required for his studies. Five hundred dollars advanced by the C. A. H. enabled another returned man to go into the grocery business.

Two cases stand out in the record where ex-service men who were trained carpenters, but without the necessary equipment, were given advances of fifty and twenty-

five dollars respectively to enable them to purchase tools. In a number of instances, men with families were given a stake to enable them to partially furnish their homes and start housekeeping. In this category, there is recorded the story of a luckless soldier who lost all his household possessions in a fire and was started afresh in life through the practical assistance of the Catholic Army Huts.

Ill luck seems to have dogged the footsteps of one veteran who returned from the war an invalid and took up farming, this having been his occupation prior to enlistment. His first year's crop was a complete failure and, to crown his misfortunes, he himself fell sick. The C. A. H. saw to it that he was carried through until the time of his recovery.

Transportation to places where they had secured employment, seemed to be a matter of some difficulty among quite a number of ex-service men; while others found it hard to keep their families and themselves until their first pay from lately found employment became due. In instances of this kind, the bona fides of the various cases having first been established, the Catholic Army Huts were always ready to lend a helping hand.

It was thus that the work progressed. The men's needs were many and varied. The C. A. H. were always ready to help the man who was endeavouring to help himself and also to be of assistance to the unfortunates for whom it was, in a large number of cases, impossible to find employment.

Other organizations, especially the Alberta Government and the various Federal Departments, co-operated to the utmost in all the undertakings of the C. A. H. and this, naturally, simplified matters very considerably. Throughout the period of its activity, the Lethbridge Office of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts undoubtedly had the complete confidence of the returned soldier population. Whatever was done was gladly done. Where help was not granted, there were invariably solid grounds for its refusal. In brief, the business of the

C. A. H. was conducted in such a manner as to protect the public who had so generously subscribed to the work and to satisfy the war veterans on whom its activities were centred.

One of the saddest events in the history of the Catholic Army Huts was the death of Lethbridge's popular Secretary, in December 1919. The victim of an unfortunate accident, he was rushed to Edmonton for expert treatment; but succumbed in the course of a few days in spite of all efforts to save him. His remains were brought back to Lethbridge under escort of the Edmonton Secretary and the dead boy's sorrowing relatives. His funeral was ample proof of the esteem in which he was held by all who knew him. Full military honours were accorded him on December 19, 1919. The Royal Northwest Mounted Police provided a firing party and escort and turned out to the full strength of the detachment for the funeral, which was attended by over four hundred war veterans and a large representation from the Knights of Columbus. The work of the Office was carried on uninterruptedly; but the C. A. H. none the less suffered the loss of a devoted worker and all the returned men of the area lost a good friend by the untimely removal of the original Secretary of the organization in Lethbridge.

**Medicine Hat.** In Medicine Hat, Alta., an office, opened in the autumn of 1919 in the quarters of the local G. W. V. A., soon became the established rendezvous of ex-service men in need of assistance in any form. An energetic Secretary was kept well occupied in answering enquiries, filling out forms and certifying documents in connection with War Service Gratuity, Pensions, the various activities of the Soldiers' Settlement Board, refunds of passage moneys for dependents and the hundred other matters bound to crop up in a community with a substantial quota of veterans.

A few months after the commencement of operations, the Secretary, himself a returned man, was called to

his ancestors, to the great regret of all whose privilege it had been to come in touch with him. The C. A. H. arranged with the necessary authorities for the funeral and for the settlement of the widow's affairs. His place was immediately filled by another ex-soldier selected by the local Committee of the Catholic Army Huts.

The business of the office, in addition to the service features, included the arranging of financial assistance for men in real need. Here, as at other points, rigid investigation of all cases was insisted on and a close check kept on the transient veteran population by means of an interchange of reports between all the offices of the Catholic Army Huts in Alberta. Genuine cases of distress were invariably handled as generously as the circumstances would permit and though Medicine Hat stands out as the quietest of the Alberta offices in the matter of loans to ex-soldiers, the practical service rendered to the needy ones was most undoubtely very warmly appreciated.

Assistance for the man who was trying to make a start in civil life was always readily given and thus we may consider one case of an advance of sixty dollars to a returned soldier to enable him to go into the shoe repairing business. In another case, fifty dollars was given to a veteran who had just put in seed given him by the Soldiers' Settlement Board and was for the time being without the means of subsistence.

One of the saddest cases which came to the notice of the Catholic Army Huts was that of a married soldier who had been out of work all winter and in the spring of 1920 finally succeeded in obtaining employment. On his way to work the first morning, he tried to steal a ride on a railway train, slipped and falling under the train had his foot so badly crushed that his immediate removal to hospital became imperative. In the meantime, his wife and little ones were no better off than they had been during the long, lean days of the foregoing months. The Catholic Army Huts made a substantial donation in cash to the family.

These are merely instances of practical help for the returned man and his dependents, picked from the records of the Medicine Hat Office, here and there, through the story of its operation, in order to give the reader a genuine idea of what the Knights of Columbus endeavoured to do for the veterans.

From the foregoing, it will be quite evident to the reader that the work of the Catholic Army Huts in the Province of Alberta was developed and carried on through many different channels. The cases cited in the all too brief stories of the various offices are typical ones. Pages could be written giving fuller details of the work; but nothing further would be achieved towards enlightening the public as to the nature and extent of the efforts of the Knights of Columbus to befriend returned men of all nations and creeds.

Whatever was done was gladly done and in conclusion it can truly be said, in all sincerity, that there was no Province of the Dominion in which the work of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts was more appreciated than in the Province of Alberta. Throughout the full period of operation, it was a distinct, one might almost say an essential, part of the life of the veterans of the area and was recognized as such by all kindred organizations, as well as by the Government and the Military authorities.

The brief facts enumerated here can be amplified by hundreds of grateful men who benefited by the work and whose individual experiences will be found to be of a very similar nature to the cases quoted.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### ACTIVITIES OF HOSPITAL COMMITTEES

**W**HEN Great Britain declared war in August 1914, Canada immediately assumed her share of the Empire's burden and the call went forth for volunteers. This call was answered by the flower of Canadian manhood from the Atlantic to the Pacific and patriotic enthusiasm waxed so strong that during the period of the war 590,572 men donned the khaki.

Of these, 60,222 paid the supreme sacrifice, while 149,732 were classified under the all-embracing term of "Casualties," a large percentage being returned to Canada for treatment. Wounds, gas, amputations and, sadder still, tuberculosis, blindness and afflictions of the mind, swelled the ranks of this huge category of returned men who so rapidly populated the hospitals operated by the Department of Militia and Defence and the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment throughout the country.

Hospital ships brought the Dominion's wounded to Atlantic ports and hospital trains conveyed them to their many and varied destinations throughout the provinces, where the hospital staffs took over the great responsibility of bringing them back as nearly as possible to fitness for civilian life.

Treating and retraining the men for after life presented a serious problem to the authorities; but they rose to the occasion and the results of their labours are a lasting proof of their zeal and efficiency.

The impossibility of cultivating the "individual" touch in its fullest measure will, however, be readily understood. The task was too great and the patients too numerous for much in this line and the "human" side of the work—the visiting of the patients, the interest in special cases, the provision of tempting delicacies and the furnishing of recreation, therefore, fell very largely to the share of patriotic bodies.

The Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts made this work in the hospitals a feature of their activities from the outset and continued to do so until practically the last of the military patients had been discharged. At all points where Huts were established, Hospital Committees were organized under local administration to care for the wounded soldiers and sailors in the various local institutions. As the Hospital population of the country increased, the field of the work was broadened and additional Committees formed, until all patients were provided for, even in the most remote sections of the country.

Wherever possible, the personal element was developed and the good things provided by the Knights were given to those for whom they were intended by the members of the Hospital Committees of the Catholic Army Huts. In many instances, the informal little chats by the visitors were found to be as much appreciated as the comforts supplied by the Committees.

The interests of the men were looked after in every practical way and their civil and military difficulties enquired into with a view to their adjustment. In many cases this work was done direct; but matters demanding particular attention were taken up with the Comptroller's office, which was always in close touch with the authorities and successful results were almost invariably obtained.

As an exemplification of the interest displayed in individual patients, it may be stated that in the case of a patient who had been permanently crippled, the Catholic Army Huts donated the most up-to-date invalid's chair available, in order to alleviate the lot of a soldier who had suffered so severely in his country's cause.

In the initial stages of the hospital activities, our visitors found a considerable percentage of patients who, owing to their weakened physical condition, craved special delicacies outside of the generous schedule of invalid diet furnished by the hospitals. The physicians

and matrons readily accepted the offer of the Catholic Army Huts to cater to the fancies of these special cases.

The varied tastes of a multitude of patients can easily be imagined. In one ward alone, one man might ask for fresh strawberries, while his neighbour thought nothing so tempting as oysters on the half shell; fruit salad and tenderloin steak respectively appealed to two cases across the room from one another; while the youth over in the corner could not be wooed from his allegiance to cream puffs. In a number of cases a shake of the head would answer the visitor's enquiry and a weak voice beg for a bunch of flowers for the bedside—and so on indefinitely.

Providing these personal requests for the patients entailed a very considerable sacrifice of time on the part of the ladies on the K. of C. staffs, apart from the hours actually spent in visiting the wards. The items cited above convey a fair idea of the marked variety of the requests. In addition, broths, soups, jellies, custards and puddings of all kinds, salads of many varieties, tarts, cakes, turnovers and pies and a host of other items too numerous to mention, came under this open invitation to the wounded to order whatever happened to strike their individual fancies. Suffice to say that, in all, some seventy-five different dishes were supplied.

The patients were regularly given cigarettes, cigars, pipes, tobacco, matches, fresh fruit, gum, chocolate bars and other comforts.

In order that the men might, at all times, be in a position to indulge in such form of entertainment or recreation as appealed to them, the C. A. H. donated a great variety of essential supplies, among which might be mentioned gramophone records, pianola records, motion picture machines and films, stereopticon views, string instruments, chess, checkers, dominoes, parchesi, playing cards, supplies for wool and bead working, books, magazines, writing materials and the always much appreciated daily newspapers.

For outdoor games, including both summer and winter sports, the hospitals were supplied with equipment, comprising baseball, cricket and football outfits; also croquet, tennis and basketball sets, sleds, skates and hockey outfits.

At various points where local conditions were such as to demand special consideration, donations of a nature in keeping with the requirements of each situation were made, always having in view that which would be of most utility to the patients.

Thus, the Military Hospital at **Fredericton, N. B.**, was supplied with a large chestnut cruising canoe and a thirty-foot 18 h.p. motor boat for the use of its patients.

The Laurentian Sanatorium at Ste. Agathe des Monts, situated in the Laurentian Mountains, some forty miles from Montreal, is in possession of a much-appreciated twenty-five foot motor launch, donated by the Catholic Army Huts.

In some instances, donations took the form of a piano, an organ, a pool table or a billiard table and the C. A. H made it a point to provide for the maintenance of all pool and billiard tables in military hospitals.

The care of the wounded and the intimate knowledge of the men's views and needs gained thereby, soon gave rise to the development of the Knights of Columbus' hospital activities along the amusement line.

Entertainment, the powerful disperser of hospital tedium, has often been quoted as one of the great aids to convalescence and final recovery and with this before them, the Knights endeavoured to make their activities in this line as broad and as far-reaching as possible: from the supplying of "comforts" for entertainments staged by the military patients themselves, to the providing of concert parties and the giving of outings to hundreds of men at a time, involving considerable expenditure.

What the Knights of Columbus did among the wounded forms a long story, which can only be briefly summarized

here by mentioning a few of the outstanding features of the work in various parts of the Dominion.

At **Halifax, N. S.**, the casualties were looked after by the Knights of Columbus Hospital Comforts' Bureau, composed of a number of energetic ladies, under the leadership of a lady chairman, herself a hard worker and in the closest touch with the hospital situation in the Halifax area throughout the activities.

Thoroughly organized and maintained in the highest state of efficiency by regular meetings, this organization developed all the various lines of the work, the supplying of individual requests for specially prepared delicacies being particularly noteworthy. The reports from the Bureau show that hundreds of these dishes were delivered to the various hospitals during the first two years following the signing of the Armistice. This excellent work is still being continued and will be until there is no further need of it. Visiting and entertainment were also handled by these same ladies.

Halifax and its environs provided a splendid field for the hospital workers. A garrison town in itself and also an important demobilization and disembarkation point, as well as the most important city in the province, its hospital population of returned men was naturally large and included all kinds of cases to be tended by the Catholic Army Huts. Cogswell Street, Camp Hill, Pine Hill, Rockhead and Station Hospitals in the city and immediate neighbourhood, with Dartmouth just across the water, the Quarantine Station and Kentville Sanatorium a few miles away, were the scene of the devoted service that the K. of C. so soon established and have so zealously maintained in their sincere effort to be of benefit to those who suffered so much in the Great Cause.

All these hospitals were regularly visited and their inmates kept fully supplied with all the standard "comforts" in addition to the individual requests; stationery, magazines and the daily papers were always maintained in abundance for the use of the men; gramophone records

were frequently changed and the stock maintained as wear and tear demanded and, above all, the men were made to feel, by the interested enquiries and assistance of the visitors, that the Knights were anxious to help them in every possible way, without any question of expense or trouble.

Amusement for the men was regularly provided in the form of concerts and entertainments, which were staged by the K. of C. and their friends on every public holiday and on other occasions as well. The convener of the Hospital Committee and her fellow-workers saw to it that no opportunity was lost of giving the boys a pleasant evening and the co-operation of patriotic citizens proved of the greatest assistance in this work.

Just how much the efforts of the Knights of Columbus in the interests of the Returned Man in hospital were really appreciated, may be readily judged from the following extract from a report of the Chairman of the Hospital Comforts' Bureau in June 1919:—

*"Matron H——gave me a special introduction to the patients of each ward saying: 'This is the lady of the K. of C. who sends you all you ask for'; and just to prove how little things are thought of and appreciated I might mention this instance:—*

*"Some months ago on the arrival of a transport, I sent ice cream and broth to four boys who had just come from Overseas. On the corner of the Comforts' Bureau card, I wrote: 'Welcome home, Boys, we will gladly do all we can for you—only call on us.' While visiting to-day, a very sick boy in a tent on being presented with a package of K. of C. cigarettes, said: 'Are you the lady from the K. of C. who sent us that little message on the first cards we received when we arrived here? My—but it was good to be thought of.'"*

Another little story, not without its humorous side, but highly illustrative of the frank confidence of the men in the Knights, is told in the action of an eighteen-year-old wearer of the Distinguished Conduct Medal who called on the convener of the Hospital Comforts' Bureau the day previous to undergoing an operation to thank her for all that had been done for him. He was told not to worry, but to get better and assured that



1



2



3



4



1. Major Rev. John Knox, O.B.E., Guelph, Ont., *Director K. of C. C.A.H.*, 1917-18-19-20. Senior Catholic Chaplain, Bramshott Camp, 1916-17-18-19.
2. Capt. Rev. I. J. E. Daniel, Edmonton, Alta., *Director K. of C. C.A.H.*, 1921-22.
3. Lt.-Col. Rev. J. A. Fortier, M.C., Halifax, N. S., *Director K. of C. C.A.H.*, 1920.
4. Major Rev. Abbé Philippe Casgrain, C.M.G., Quebec, Que., *Director K. of C. C.A.H.*, 1917-18-19.



everything he wanted would be sent to him. The following day, he sent the good lady the following terse but most comprehensive message:—

*"Dear Madam:—Will you please send something good to eat? I have been operated on at five minutes to twelve. I would like to have something to eat. I would like some soup or anything, please. I am yours, etc."*

What more could have been said in volumes of eloquence than this young hero expressed in his few plain words?

Other numerous proofs of appreciation were also received by the Hospital Comforts' Bureau, and are now in the records of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts to the credit of the devoted workers in and about Halifax.

At **Sydney, N. S.**, arrangements were made for the free admission of all military hospital patients to the local theatres and concerts and dances were arranged in the Moxham Military Hospital. The orchestra and talent for these entertainments were provided by the C. A. H. Aberdeen Hospital was also looked after, both institutions being generously supplied with K. of C. comforts.

Comforts were also supplied to the Highland View Hospital at **Amherst, N. S.**, and to the military patients at **Antigonish, Glace Bay** and **Yarmouth**.

The Ladies' Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in **St. John, N. B.**, made the very most of their opportunities in the four city hospitals and also at River Glade Sanatorium. The General Public Hospital, East St. John County Hospital, Lancaster Military Hospital, Fairville and West Side Military Hospital formed the city district for visiting and the distribution of comforts.

Entertainments were undoubtedly a feature of the work for the soldiers under treatment in St. John and were frequently given at the various hospitals in the form of concerts which were very much appreciated by the men. These pleasant afternoons and evenings were

generally rounded off by a hot meal served by the volunteer workers, the catering being looked after by the Catholic Army Huts.

The festive seasons were also made very real to the military patients. Hallowe'en parties were carried out in the time-honoured manner; Christmas brought trees to the wards and carols to the inmates, while Easter was marked by the distribution of presents in the shape of beautifully prepared baskets of home-made Easter eggs and candy and, of course, the usual generous supply of K. of C. "smokes".

Apart from the work in the hospitals themselves, the "personal" touch was developed by numerous teas given to the men at various times and places by the ladies. These were, in most cases, small parties frequently repeated and with the "home touch" as much in evidence as possible. Another equally "personal" service was the giving of automobile drives to convalescents, cars, almost invariably driven by their owners, being generously volunteered for this purpose.

Entertainment, in the generally accepted sense of the word, was covered by concerts given in the various institutions, attended in each case by all men who were well enough to do so and always occasions of an "issue" of the good things provided by the Catholic Army Huts.

Arrangements were also made to take patients, whose physical condition permitted, to motion picture and theatrical performances in the city, at various times.

River Glade Sanatorium, some little distance from St. John, was regularly visited by representatives of the Committee, and the needs of its military "cases" carefully looked after. On a survey of the situation, with a view of furnishing the customary supply of recreation matter, including newspapers and magazines, it was found that a library was badly needed for the use of the returned men and the Catholic Army Huts immediately donated a hundred books as a foundation for the filling of the



1



2



3



4



1. Geo. Hanrahan, Windsor, Ont., *Director, Vice-President and member executive K. of C. C.A.H., 1921-22.*
2. L. G. Jourdain, Three Rivers, Que., *Director and member executive K. of C. C.A.H., 1921-22.*
3. Dr. Wm. P. Broderick, D.D.S., St. John, N.B., *Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1918-19-20-21-22.*
4. Major Rev. Thos. McCarthy, M.C., Stratford, Ont., *Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1921-22.*



shelves, in addition to furnishing the standard supply of reading material, games and so forth.

The Council of the Knights of Columbus at **Fredericton, N. B.**, was active in caring for the patients in the local military hospital, making regular visits and attending to the distribution of the supplies furnished by the Catholic Army Huts. In addition to this, as already stated, a motor launch and a canoe were also provided for the use of the soldiers.

The Order in **Moncton** also kept the local wounded in view. The call here was, perhaps, not so pressing as at the other New Brunswick points; but the situation was adequately handled and the men made to feel that the Knights were genuinely interested in them.

**Prince Edward Island**, though its number of sick and wounded was small, carried on its hospital work on the same high standard on a proportionate scale, Falconwood Hospital, the Rena McLean Memorial Hospital at Charlottetown and the Dalton Sanatorium at North Wiltshire, P.E.I., being among the institutions whose war cases were visited and generally fostered by the Knights of Columbus.

The hospital population of **Quebec City** was small, as compared with other points; but all military cases in the Jeffrey Hale, Laval and Military Hospitals, were visited and given the usual K. of C. comforts. Donations to these hospitals included two victrolas and a generous supply of records.

The military patients of the Sanatorium at Lake Edward and the Mental Hospital at Beauport were also included in the activities of the Catholic Army Huts. Permanent enjoyment for the soldiers at Lake Edward, during the winter season, was assured by the installation of a toboggan slide, for which the Catholic Army Huts supplied the lighting installation. A piano was also presented to this hospital.

Work worthy of special mention was done at the Government Quarantine Station at Grosse Isle, down the river

from Quebec. At this point, all doubtful cases returning on transports were landed for observation and treatment. The tedium of several weeks of quarantine on one's way home, after many years' absence, may be easily pictured and the Knights did all that was in their power to improve the circumstances of the unlucky ones who were obliged to put in time in isolation. An abundance of reading material was always maintained for the use of the military cases; while indoor and outdoor games were also arranged for their benefit. Visiting was, of course, impossible; but the institution was at all times kept well supplied with the articles commonly distributed among hospital patients by the Catholic Army Huts.

The military patients at the Sherbrooke Hospital, **Sherbrooke, Que.**, though few in number, also came in for their share of K. of C. supplies.

The **Montreal** area, comprising ten hospitals for the treatment of ex-service men, under the Departments of Militia and Defence and Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment proved a busy field for the Knights of Columbus. In the city itself, the Prince of Wales' or Drummond Street Hospital, the MacDougall Home, Mount Royal Hospital, Alexandra Hospital, Belmont Hospital, and the military wards of the Royal Victoria Hospital, all called for attention. In the immediate vicinity, the military inmates of the Protestant Hospital for the Insane, at Verdun and the Ste. Jean de Dieu Hospital Longue Pointe, (also mental cases) and the hundreds of patients at the Hospital at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, provided additional territory for the workers of the Catholic Army Huts.

Apart from these institutions, the Laurentian Sanatorium and Laurentide Inn at Ste. Agathe des Monts came under the administration of the Montreal Hospital Committee of the Catholic Army Huts and, notwithstanding their isolated location, received such attention that the name of the Knights of Columbus soon became a household word among the patients.

The care of the city hospitals alone was a huge task, calling for systematized work along almost every line of hospital activity. The distribution of cigarettes and other welcome articles to the men was only the beginning of the endeavours to make the wounded in Montreal hospitals feel that the Order, through the Catholic Army Huts, was genuinely and practically interested in their well-being from every point of view and ready to help them in any possible way.

The "human" end of the work, through personal contact and individual interest, was developed to a wonderful degree in the great Canadian Metropolis and the representatives of the Catholic Army Huts would return from their rounds of visits with memoranda of interviews with various patients to work on and follow up, calling for action and energy in many ways and through widely different channels.

The various outlying institutions were visited regularly and the welfare of the men in them looked after in precisely the same manner as was done in the city proper. Special provision had, naturally, to be made in the case of mental hospitals; but through the co-operation of their staffs their unfortunate inmates were given everything that it was within the authority of the doctors to allow them to receive. The requests were, of course, made by the authorities on behalf of their charges. Indoor games of all kinds were generously supplied, in addition to football and baseball outfits and sleds donated for outdoor recreation. Cigars were substituted for the usual ration of cigarettes and extra tobacco frequently furnished at the request of the authorities.

The Hospital at Ste. Anne de Bellevue was at all times an important point of the Hospital Committee's plans, on account of the large number of patients always in residence there and was regularly visited and also in constant touch with the Catholic Army Huts through its resident Chaplain and its office.

Outdoor games of all kinds were featured at this point among the "cases" who were able to take part in them. Cricket, baseball, football and sports of various natures were all developed with great success, a number of enthusiastic meets being organized. The supplies necessary for this class of recreation were readily provided by the Catholic Army Huts. It may be remarked here that the mental cases under treatment at this hospital developed a first-class cricket team, well able to hold its own against any of the other departments of the institution and became well-known throughout the Montreal area, with a large number of successful matches to its credit.

The entertainment end of the activities was well kept up at all times and in all parts of the district, no trouble or expense being spared in the carrying on of the work in the most efficient manner, both in regard to the supply of recreation appliances and the provision of amusements for the soldier patients.

In the central section of the Montreal area, frequent band concerts were given at the various hospitals in turn, as many patients as possible attending from the other city homes and hospitals, the proceedings in each case being run by the C. A. H. Hospital Committee, to the usual accompaniment of liberal supplies of refreshments and cigarettes. On most of these occasions, vocal numbers were introduced into the programme, through the kindness of local amateurs who, in some cases, were themselves members of the Committee.

Ste. Anne de Bellevue Hospital, too, came in for its share of the entertainments, in the form of visits from concert parties and band entertainments. One of the best performances staged at this point was an afternoon concert by the Band of H. M. Grenadier Guards, on the day previous to its embarkation for England, after the close of its engagement at the Toronto Exhibition in 1919. Through the courtesy of the Exhibition Committee the full corps of musicians was taken out to Ste. Anne's,

gave a performance in the afternoon, had supper as the guests of the hospital authorities at the close of the proceedings and returned to Montreal in the evening. All the transportation arrangements were looked after by the Catholic Army Huts, who also provided large quantities of refreshments, cigarettes and "comforts" both for the members of the band and the patients at the hospital.

The amateur concert parties for work among the wounded, organized in Montreal under the K. of C. Hospital Committee, were quite a distinctive feature of the work. These patriotic ladies and gentlemen gathered together and placed themselves at the constant disposal of the Committee for concerts in Montreal and vicinity, giving concerts at Ste. Agathe, Verdun and Ste. Anne's.

Plans were completed early in 1919 to send up amateur concert parties to the Laurentian Sanatorium at Ste. Agathe des Monts and to provide a regular series of monthly concerts for the military patients.

Vocal numbers, recitations, instrumental pieces and dancing went to the making up of these programmes, an orchestra of five or six pieces being almost invariably in attendance, thanks to the generous spirit evidenced by several Montreal instrumentalists. On a very memorable occasion, a representative choir from one of the city's best known glee clubs volunteered its services and was taken up to Ste. Agathe in a body to entertain the soldiers at the Sanatorium.

In addition to these concerts, the C. A. H. were in a position, thanks to the courtesy of various film companies, to maintain a constant supply of new programmes for the Ste. Agathe patients, including all the up-to-date features in photo-play. This made it possible to change the bill twice each week and went a long way towards keeping the men amused between the K. of C. concerts.

Of all the Canadian provinces, it is probable that Ontario provided the widest and most varied field for the efforts of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts.

Every large centre had one or more hospitals for the treatment of returned men; while in the smaller towns, the regular civil hospital had special wards and beds devoted to soldiers and the Committees organized to look after this work gave these patients every possible attention. As at other points, the work of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in **Ottawa** was carried on by K. of C. workers.

Visits were regularly made and comforts distributed to the patients in the Protestant General Hospital, the Water Street Hospital, St. Luke's Hospital and the Fleming Convalescent Home. In addition to the standard gifts to the men, games of all kinds were always amply maintained, including tennis equipment and other athletic supplies.

Ottawa, though its number of military hospital patients was comparatively limited, carried on in precisely the same manner and along all the lines developed at points with larger hospital populations.

The men were always kept well amused by many different forms of entertainment provided for them. Motor drives out into the country given at frequent intervals were invariably made the occasion of the giving out of cigarettes and other comforts and were much looked forward to. Concerts were also given in the various hospitals throughout the year. Amongst others, the Glee Club of Ottawa Council put on a much appreciated evening's entertainment at the Fleming Convalescent Home.

**Brockville**, with its casualties in the Eastern and General Hospitals, carried out the good work of the Catholic Army Huts through a local secretary. Both hospitals were regularly visited, comforts given to the men and whatever it was possible to do to be of service was done. It was not possible to develop the work to its fullest extent in the General Hospital, which housed the mental cases of the district; but what it was not practicable to do for these unfortunates in the way of personal service,

was more than made up to them in generous supplies of "smokes" and "eatables."

**Kingston** workers had the Sydenham, Ontario, Rockwood and Calderwood Hospitals to look after in the city proper; with the Mowat Sanatorium, at Portsmouth, Ont., within a stone's throw of them and naturally, in their area.

The large hospital population of this district called for specially devoted efforts and unceasing activity for the interpretation of the Knights of Columbus programme and the organization was most fortunate in having, at all periods of its endeavours workers who, in every way, filled the requirements. Frontenac Council K. of C. may always be proud of the services of its members among the sick and wounded.

Games and recreational appliances of all kinds were liberally supplied to the various hospitals. These included footballs, baseball, tennis and cricket sets and other outdoor games; hundreds of packs of playing cards and a creditable supply of smoking materials and other hospital comforts were, of course, regularly distributed.

The Hospital Committee also gave careful attention to the filling of special or individual requests made by or on behalf of the patients.

Amusements were constantly devised for the men in the various homes and hospitals; and under the auspices of Frontenac Council K. of C., upwards of fifty concerts were given for the benefit of the patients. Numerous letters of appreciation, both from the authorities and the patients themselves, are to be found in the Kingston file of the Catholic Army Huts; while the Kingston press on various occasions were kind enough to note our efforts on behalf of the patients and commented most favourably upon the excellent calibre of these entertainments.

Probably the most outstanding entertainment provided for the wounded in the Kingston district, was the outing to Brophy's Point in the summer of 1919. Over three hundred convalescents were guests of the

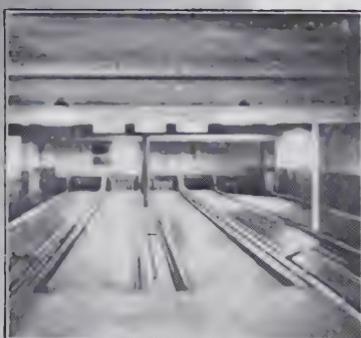
Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts on this occasion. The steamer "Wolfe Islander" was chartered and a first-class orchestra engaged to provide music for the outing. On arrival at the Point, games and sports including a most interesting baseball match, went to the passing of the afternoon, at the close of which a sumptuous meal was served. The men were also furnished with a generous supply of "smokes", ice cream and confections and all who availed themselves of the Knights' invitation returned to their respective hospitals feeling that they had indeed spent a most pleasant day.

**Toronto**, during and following the demobilization period, had more sick and wounded soldiers to care for than any other city in the Dominion and the many institutions for their treatment in and around the city presented a splendid field for Knights of Columbus' hospital work. This, from first to last, was maintained on a very high plane through the hard work of the Committee and the army of industrious volunteers who flocked to service under the C. A. H. badge.

The situation was fully analysed in the very early stages of the return of the troops from Overseas and a regular plan of action drawn up to cover all lines of activity. Visiting, interviewing, the distribution of comforts and delicacies, the reconnaissance of the various hospitals with a view to providing recreational equipment and the furnishing of entertainment for the patients, were all looked after by K. of C. workers, whose efforts were seconded by hundreds of enthusiastic volunteers whenever necessary.

Regular visits for the purpose of distributing cigarettes, candy, fruit and delicacies and getting in personal touch with the men, were made to all the hospitals in the city including the Base Military Hospital, Station Military Hospital, St. Andrew's Military Hospital, College Street, Spadina Military Hospital, Davisville Military Hospital, Dominion Orthopædic Hospital, Euclid Hall, Toronto General Hospital, Toronto Mental Hospital and Western

*The way the K. of C. Huts in Canada were equipped*



1. Billiard room.
2. Bowling alley.

3. Swimming pool.
4. K. of C. Hut, Toronto, Ont.

5. Reading room K. of C. Hut, Hamilton, Ont.





Hospital; while in the outlying area frequent calls were made at the Station Hospital, Long Branch, Newmarket Hospital and the Mental Hospital at Mimico.

The hospital donations in the Toronto area naturally ran into large figures and, in order that the reader may have a fair conception of their magnitude, it may be mentioned that upwards of one million five-hundred thousand cigarettes and cigars, totalling tens of thousands, were given away. Apart from these and other regular lines of comforts, the quantities of which were correspondingly large, the homes and hospitals were provided with an adequate quantity of permanent and useful equipment for the benefit of their patients. Among these gifts were three victrolas and some three hundred records, some twenty-five hundred packs of playing cards, generous supplies of practically all kinds of indoor games and also a never diminishing stock of reading and writing materials. At Spadina Hospital an orchestra was equipped for the men and was much appreciated.

Amusement was looked on as a very active branch of the work, frequent entertainments and concerts being given for the casualties under treatment in the various hospitals, while special outings for the men became an outstanding feature. The following instances will give a fair idea of what was accomplished along these lines:

In July 1919, twelve hundred military hospital cases were gathered from the various homes and hospitals of the city to be the guests of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts at Scarborough Beach.

In the early afternoon, two hundred private motor cars, kindly loaned by their owners, collected the more serious cases among the patients at their respective doors, while a number of special street cars were provided for the transportation of those whose physical condition would permit of this means of conveyance. Arrived at the gates of the amusement park, each man was handed a supply of K. of C. cigarettes, over two thousand packages

being distributed, and given a paper hatband inscribed: "A Night with the Knights".

All soldiers were admitted free of charge to the park and its many shows and attractions, the guests undoubtedly making the very most of their opportunities. At the close of an afternoon of real enjoyment, they were given a full course meal served by six hundred lady volunteers. The entire menu was provided by the Catholic Army Huts and much enjoyed by all, even by those so incapacitated as to necessitate nurses and orderlies sitting with them at the tables. Following the supper each man received a good cigar and the whole party was grouped and photographed.

One of the most amusing features of the day was the operating of a mock court, before which various members of the C. A. H. Committee and workers were hailed on ridiculous charges and fined small sums for the benefit of the hospital patients. A dance rounded off the proceedings and at nine-thirty the automobiles and street cars called for their passengers, who arrived safely at their respective hospitals in time for the regulation "lights out".

This outing was regarded as one of the finest entertainments ever provided for the wounded in the Queen City.

On another occasion, a similar trip was made by some eleven hundred casualties to Hanlan's Point. A fleet of autos and street cars took the men from the hospitals to the dock, where they were quickly embarked on the ferry boat provided for them and taken across the Bay to the Island. These same cars met the boat on its return in the evening.

At the Island, they were admitted free of charge to a league baseball game, amply supplied with candy and "smokes" and given a hot supper at the close of the game. Sports were also organized for those caring to take part in them, while the remainder spent a pleasant evening on their own account. The handling of entertainments of this kind was, undoubtedly, no small task.

Entertainment for the more serious cases was by no means overlooked. In the summer of 1919, some two hundred stretcher cases were taken for a trip on the S. S. "Cayuga" to Lewiston, N. Y. and the outing was such a success that it was repeated in the summer of 1920. On this latter occasion, six hundred casualties from the Toronto hospitals, many of them on stretchers and in wheeled chairs, were brought in motor cars from their respective places of treatment and embarked on the steamer early in the afternoon. On board, most complete arrangements had been made for the entertainment of the guests: a band was in attendance, a concert staged by volunteer performers and the men made to feel at home in every way. On the return trip to Toronto, in the evening, supper was served to the soldiers on board by lady workers of the Catholic Army Huts aided by the Committee and other members of the Order who were on hand to entertain and look after the men. These two outings rank among the first achievements of the Knights and will long be spoken of by those invited as red-letter days, pleasantly breaking the routine of hospital treatment.

It will be seen from a glance at the foregoing, that no trouble or expense was spared to ensure maximum efficiency in the efforts of the Knights of Columbus to be of service to those who had themselves served so well. The work of all the unselfish men and women who volunteered their time and energies in the interests of the wounded must never be lost sight of for without their valuable assistance, the task undertaken by the Catholic Army Huts would have been almost if not quite impossible.

Toronto and its neighbourhood housed roughly an average of three thousand men in its hospitals and homes. To give full details of the work for this huge gathering of soldiers would require far more space than can be devoted to it here. These figures and the brief outline given will, however, convey a comprehensive idea of the field in which the Catholic Army Huts were called on to

conduct their operations. The men themselves, as well as those directly responsible for their welfare, will ever vouch for the good results achieved.

**Hamilton, Ont.**, was one of the points where the ladies were particularly active in hospital work and during the full period of C. A. H. activities the members of the Ladies' Auxiliary were untiring in their efforts on behalf of the casualties. The Hamilton Asylum, Mount Hamilton Hospital, Hamilton Special Hospital, Hamilton Sanatorium and the Brant Hospital, Burlington, all came under the Committee's administration and nothing was left undone for the maximum good of all their respective patients.

Cigarettes, candy of all kinds, fruit, tobacco and many other kinds of comforts were regularly distributed to the men by the workers whose visits, here as elsewhere, became part of the regular curriculum for the institutions concerned. Recreational supplies were also furnished on a generous scale, including some three hundred gramophone records, all of which were very much appreciated. The distribution of supplies was, naturally, spread over a considerable period and the constantly renewed gramophone records gave the wounded in the various wards a continuous supply of new music.

The local Council of the Order did yeoman service in the entertainment line. A number of energetic Knights banded together as the "Choral Minstrels" quickly became an institution among the military patients of the area, giving monthly concerts in each hospital. This made the amusement end of the activities very much easier for the Committee than it might otherwise have been.

The Hospital Committee of the Catholic Army Huts, however, availed itself of the Council's care of entertainment in the hospitals to concentrate its own individual efforts on other forms of amusement for the men. The result was that a number of most successful outings were arranged, all the military patients in the district being

invited on each occasion. These included trips to Hamilton Beach, Wabasso Park and M. & O. League Baseball games. In addition, the sick and wounded were also guests of the C. A. H. at the boxing bouts arranged for the entertainment of returned men in Hamilton and vicinity during the winter months. Members of the local Council of the Knights of Columbus also acted as hosts to all casualties at a theatre party, followed by a dinner and a gymnastic display at the Catholic Athletic Club in the evening.

The net results in and around Hamilton were all that could be desired and both the Committee and the local branch of the Order deserve a warm word of praise for the success achieved by their energies.

Speedwell Military Hospital, in **Guelph, Ont.**, was most splendidly looked after by a Committee recruited from the local Council of the Knights of Columbus under the leadership of their energetic Grand Knight. An interesting sidelight on this organization was the fact that the members of the Order who looked after the visiting of the wounded were young men who themselves had been overseas in the country's service. This, naturally, tended to make the bond of sympathy and understanding between the Catholic Army Huts workers and their charges even stronger than usual.

That good results were achieved is proven by a testimonial signed by over two hundred patients and their doctors and nurses, forwarded to the Grand Knight, thanking him and his associates for their interest in the hospital. Besides this, there are some interesting quotations of individual expressions of appreciation, in the Committee's reports. A fair sample of these is: "The K. of C.'s. are the boys: they kept with us in France and England and they are staying with us yet. They are the real thing". Spontaneous remarks of this kind mean more than volumes of letters.

The Catholic Army Huts in **London, Ont.**, which had an average hospital population of some seven hundred

returned men in its area, were peculiarly handicapped in its hospital activities by the nature of the ailments for which the patients were being treated. Entertainment on the scale commonly followed at other points could not be carried on here, on account of the regimen of the various institutions for the efficient handling of their inmates. The Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, however, saw to it that the patients were always in possession of a good supply of gramophone records, playing cards, literature, indoor games and other hospital comforts, as well as outdoor recreational appliances. Whatever it was possible to do for the men was done and many of them were daily attendants at the Hut during the period of its operation. It was also arranged, on one occasion, to take as many men as were permitted by the hospital authorities to see a baseball match, an outing appreciated by all.

In this area, the Committee was responsible for the care of the men in the Victoria, Tecumseh, Wolseley Barracks, Erie Isolation and St. Joseph's Hospitals, in addition to which it also catered to the comfort of the 260 odd tubercular patients at the Byron Sanatorium.

The patients who found themselves allotted to the Hotel Dieu Hospital in **Windsor, Ont.**, had nothing to regret in so far as the attention they received from the Knights of Columbus was concerned. Under the leadership of the local Council's energetic Grand Knight, a Committee was formed to look after the visiting and care of these casualties along precisely the same ideas as elsewhere.

Though the number of patients was, naturally, rather limited, much good work was done. Regular visits were made and comforts given out. In addition to this a number of concerts were given at various times.

In the Northern section of the province the men in the Providence Hospital at **Haileybury** were well looked after by local Knights; while similar work was done by the Returned Soldiers' Committee of the **Cobalt**

Council for the wounded in that town. The number of patients was limited in both cases; but the visitors devoted themselves just as whole-heartedly to the work as the workers did in the more populous hospitals.

**Port Arthur** averaged some twenty patients in its Military Hospital. These were well looked after by local Knights, who visited them regularly and saw to it that a good supply of games and hospital delicacies, smokes, etc., was maintained. In the neighbouring city of **Fort William** the Catholic Army Huts, through the medium of the Council, co-operated with the other war-activity organizations for the care of the casualties there.

**Winnipeg** found plenty of scope for its activities among the sick and wounded and the Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts certainly saw to it that the men in the hospitals in the city and its neighbourhood received every possible attention.

The distribution of hospital comforts was carried out along practically the same lines as elsewhere, quantities were made to fit the situation and the hundreds of ex-service men in and around "The Peg" who came under the ministrations of the Hospital Committee were thoroughly well looked after in the way of supplies. The same may be said of the gifts to the hospitals for the use of their patients.

The work of the lady volunteers at this point is to be most heartily commended. Not only were they tireless in the visits to the men in the wards, but they also went in for the development of the "individual request" end of the work and kindred efforts, very extensively.

The Hut on Fort Street and the hospitals were the scenes of a very large number of concerts and pleasant evenings for military hospital patients. These evenings were often prefaced by an afternoon's automobile drive out into the country, approximately a hundred men and their attendant nurses being taken out at a time. An

idea of the class of entertainments given may be gathered from the following:

In September 1919, eighty-six men and eight nurses from the Tuxedo Military Hospital were guests at an evening at the Hut. The Ladies' Auxiliary and the Hospital Committee provided an excellent programme of songs and instrumental numbers, followed by a card party. Cigarettes were distributed during the evening and sandwiches, cake, candy, fruit of all kinds and tea and coffee were served at the close of the proceedings, after which the men returned to the hospital.

Hallowe'en of the same year will long be remembered by those who spent it in the military ward of the General Hospital, Winnipeg. The Catholic Army Huts acted as hosts at a real Hallowe'en entertainment. Through the energies of the local Committee, the ward was decorated in the approved Hallowe'en fashion with the regulation pumpkins, black cats, etc. The entertainment consisted of instrumental and vocal numbers and a number of popular choruses lustily sung by all present. Needless to say "smokes" were generously distributed and the proceedings rounded off with refreshments served by the ladies.

The Catholic Army Huts covered the Manitoba Military Hospital, LaSalle Hospital, St. Boniface Hospital, Tuxedo Military Hospital, Deer Lodge Hospital and the Ninette Sanatorium in their work and when it is figured that these institutions, collectively, housed an average of 700 men, the scope of the activities can be readily gauged.

The Hospital Committee in **Brandon**, organized in connection with the local Hostel of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, had comparatively few casualties to look after, Brandon General Hospital's military ward being the only place of treatment for returned men in the area. The quality of the work was, however, maintained at a high standard in all lines. The men were visited and provided with comforts in the

same manner as in the more heavily populated hospital areas and the hospital came in for a good share of the recreational appliances which the K. of C. distributed throughout the Dominion. Concerts were frequently organized for the men, by means of parties visiting the hospital and an afternoon visit to a local theatre became a regular weekly event.

**Saskatoon, Sask.**, found its quota of sick and wounded soldiers in the City Hospital and the St. Paul's Hospital, both within the city limits and therefore most readily accessible for visiting purposes. The activities were looked after by the usual Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, on which a number of patriotic citizens volunteered for service.

Much of the work, including the visiting of the wards was done by the Ladies' Auxiliary, whose presence at prescribed intervals soon became a much anticipated event in the lives of those undergoing treatment in the hospitals. These visits, in addition to a pleasant chat, always meant a generous distribution of candy, smokes, fruit and other comforts, as well as practical help for any man who might have any difficulties to be adjusted. Very frequently, too, amateur performers were added to the visiting parties and a number of most successful impromptu concerts held.

The Earl Grey Hospital, housing an average of from seventy-five to a hundred military patients, was the scene of many pleasant attentions for the men by the Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts at **Regina, Sask.**.

Apart from the regular line of work in the way of making visits and giving little presents of smokes, candy, fruit and other dainties to the men, the Committee, helped by a strong Ladies' Auxiliary, made a feature of entertaining the men in a number of different ways. Special meals, such as chicken dinners, oyster suppers and other pleasing menus, did much to break up the usual routine of hospital diet. These meals were a regular set task of the Committee

and given to the men very frequently. Concerts were also staged for the patients at frequent intervals and much appreciated, as were a number of automobile drives which the Committee arranged for the boys.

The Mental Hospital at Battleford was also regularly furnished with K. of C. hospital supplies.

The Sanatorium at Fort Qu'Appelle coming under the care of the Regina Committee, received every attention and the patients were regularly supplied with comforts and, in addition, were furnished with various indoor games. The C. A. H. also donated one hundred volumes of standard authors, in order to form the nucleus of a library for the use of the patients of the Sanatorium.

A well-organized Ladies' Committee took charge of the bulk of the work of seeing to the needs of the returned men in the Saskatchewan Military Convalescent Hospital and Providence Hospital in **Moose Jaw, Sask.**, interpreting the programme of care of the wounded mapped out by the Catholic Army Huts in a very able manner and maintaining as high a degree of competent efficiency as was to be found elsewhere.

War casualties in **Medicine Hat, Alta.**, were under the direct care of the office of the Catholic Army Huts established at that point and were kept in the closest touch with the machinery of the K. of C. for the assistance of returned soldiers, the men's various army and post-discharge difficulties being gladly and promptly taken up by the Secretary who, with his assistants, visited the wards at regular intervals.

With some four hundred service men undergoing treatment in its area, **Edmonton, Alta.**, was, as may well be imagined, a busy centre of Knights of Columbus Hospital activities. An excellent Committee and a hard-working Secretary covered the ground most effectively, carrying on the work in all lines to the great benefit of the patients.

In the city and its immediate vicinity, the Edmonton Military Hospital, the Convalescent Home, the General Hospital, and the Hospital operated by the D. S. C. R.

in Strathcona, made a busy local field; while the Hospital of the Sisters of Providence at Daysland, the Wetaskiwin Hospital and the Mental Hospital at Red Deer, which were also all served from Edmonton, swelled the hospital population ministered to by the Committee to an average of something like four hundred men during the busy days.

Concerts and other entertainments were frequently organized for the men, while outings were made a special line of the workers' efforts and were invariably attended with the greatest success. The trips were made by automobile, in the majority of cases in cars loaned by patriotic citizens and, when these were not available, autos were hired from public garages by the Catholic Army Huts.

During the summer seasons, Wetaskiwin's patients were taken up to Fort Saskatchewan and a number of trips were arranged for them to Cooking Lake, Pigeon Lake and other points of interest. In July, 1920, a party was organized from Edmonton Military Hospital to Alberta Beach, some fifty miles from the city on the Canadian National Railway. In addition to supper and all kinds of "comforts" and "smokes", the men were kept well amused in many ways; notably by trips on the lake in motor launches and rowing boats until a late hour, when they were taken back to Edmonton.

In July, Leduc, some twenty miles out, was chosen as an excursion point and eleven automobiles took a happy party of casualties from the Edmonton hospitals to an afternoon of sports of various kinds, including baseball and tennis, with such other amusements as would appeal to the patients. In the evening an excellent supper was served at the local hotel and the men arrived back at their respective wards thoroughly satisfied at having had a real good time.

In addition to the instances cited, automobile rides out into the country in various directions were a regular arrangement; so that the men had nothing to lack in the

way of entertainment. In Wetaskiwin, for example, military tubercular patients were taken out for drives three times a week.

A very large quantity of cigarettes and other smoking materials, candy, fruit and delicacies of all kinds were distributed. Games, reading and writing materials were also maintained in all the hospitals, and a number of special donations made, including easy chairs in Edmonton and a motion picture machine to the Wetaskiwin Hospital.

The Colonel Belcher Military Hospital, Calgary Headquarters, Sunnyside Hospital, General Hospital, Isolation Hospital, Holy Cross Military Hospital and the Mount View Sanatorium, housed the four hundred returned men who formed the average hospital population of the **Calgary** area.

Here, as at other points of activity, the Knights of Columbus had a strong Hospital Committee to look after the casualties and nothing was lacking in the way of comforts of all kinds for the men and careful consideration for their amusement and recreation. Gramophone and player-piano records were supplied to the various hospitals, together with indoor and outdoor games of all kinds and generous stocks of reading matter and writing materials for the use of the patients.

Amusements were frequently arranged for the men and it may be said to the great credit of the Committee that, amongst many others, they arranged and carried out one of the finest outings for hospital patients ever staged in the West and most certainly the finest trip ever made out of **Calgary**.

After considerable preparation, involving much work for the Committee, August 15th, 1920 saw the record event of the Catholic Army Huts activities in the district when all the military hospital patients in **Calgary** were taken for a day's trip to **Banff**.

In addition to the huge contingent of hospital patients and their attendant nurses and orderlies, a very considerable group of official representatives of the Dominion and Alberta Provincial Governments, returned soldiers' bodies of the district and the Order in Calgary and other parts of Alberta, was in attendance at the appointed hour, when the party entrained on a specially chartered train, which the C. A. H. took over for the occasion. The "special" arrived at Banff at 11.30 a.m. after a most pleasant journey, during the course of which plentiful "eats" and "smokes" were provided by the K. of C. Committee. Arrived at Banff, the guests were taken to the Mount Royal, Homestead and Sanatorium Hotels for dinner. During the afternoon, the baths were open to all veterans free of charge; automobiles were on hand to take the men practically anywhere they might wish to go in the vicinity and the local detachment of Royal Northwest Mounted Police staged a gymkhana for their entertainment. All these forms of amusement were well patronized and, in addition, a number of men put in the afternoon sightseeing on their own account, all restrictions being withdrawn for the day.

Supper was provided for the party at the hotels early in the evening, allowing the men time for a stroll about between the conclusion of the meal and train time. The special train left Banff at eight o'clock, arriving in Calgary at 10.45 p.m., when the guests were taken back to their hospitals, after having enjoyed a most memorable day's excursion at the hands of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts.

Numerous letters of appreciation, as well as the reports of the affair in the local newspapers, referred to the outing as the finest entertainment for returned men ever put on in Calgary.

This gives a good idea of the class of work done by the Knights for the Returned Man, and they were just as glad to be able to do it as the men were that they were able to avail themselves of it.

The Catholic Army Huts workers in **Lethbridge, Alta.**, were responsible for the care of the patients in the Galt Hospital in the city itself and also for those in the Frank Sanatorium, a few miles out. Though the field was necessarily somewhat limited, the work was carried on according to the regular schedule, the men being visited, comforts and supplies furnished and entertainments arranged. Thanks to the generous co-operation of local amateur performers, the concerts given in the hospitals were most successful, the troupes being well-balanced and, in most cases, accompanied by instrumentalists who, apart from their own numbers, acted as orchestras.

On the Pacific Coast, as in other parts of the Dominion, the work among the sick and wounded under treatment in the hospitals was a distinct feature of the services of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts. Wherever a Hut was in operation or a Returned Soldiers' Committee established, the casualties in the neighbourhood were assured of practical sympathy and consideration.

Thus it was in **Vancouver** that the patients in the General, Shaughnessy, Fairmont, Essondale and Royal Columbia Military Hospitals were under the special charge of the Hospital Committee of the Knights of Columbus organized in connection with the local Hut and kept in constant touch with the benefits of the organization. The wards were visited and cigarettes, fruit, candy and other dainties distributed to the men; while the hospitals themselves were kept well stocked with reading and writing materials, gramophone records and games of all kinds for the use of their inmates.

The wounded men who were able to get about were always most welcome at the entertainments given at and in connection with the Catholic Army Hut. Automobiles were regularly placed at their disposal and they were made to feel that the Knights took a genuine interest in their welfare in every way.

**Victoria**, with its wounded housed in the St. Joseph's, Craigdarroch Military, Jubilee Military and

Esquimalt Military Hospitals, had a very fair number of soldier patients to look after at all times. An energetic Committee undertook the lightening of their burden by carrying on along the usually prescribed lines, visiting the hospitals regularly, distributing "comforts" and so forth, and looking after the many little difficulties in the men's post-discharge affairs. Outings for the men were also frequently arranged. Automobiles were generously provided and nothing was left undone to ensure the men's comfort during the drives which were given them out to various country points in the surrounding neighbourhood. All facilities were given to the patients to enjoy the privileges of the Catholic Army Huts to the utmost that their condition permitted. The Hut was an open home for them at all times and they were quick to avail themselves of its hospitality.

The **Kamloops** Council undertook the care of the Royal Inland Hospital, the Military Hospital at Vernon, and the Tranquille Sanatorium. These important institutions were allowed to lack nothing that the Knights could provide for the comfort of their patients. All the hospital supplies and comforts regularly furnished by the Catholic Army Huts were brought to the hospitals through the local Committee, including books and make-up materials for entertainment given by the patients for their own amusement. The local members of the Order who served so untiringly on the Committee deserve all credit for their patriotic enterprise.

The story of the activities of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in the interest of the soldiers and sailors in Canada's hospitals, would be incomplete without reference, in a general way at least, to the work done for and among the wounded during the Christmas season.

Elsewhere in these pages, the reader will become familiar with the efforts made at all points to bring the spirit of Christmas home to the Returned Man and to those whose men had not returned—nor would—from the Great Adventure. Similarly, the Knights endeavoured

to make Christmas as cheery as possible for those on the sick list.

Christmas 1919 and 1920 saw special entertainments and supplies of fruits and special Christmas cheer furnished to local hospitals by the Committees responsible for them; trees in the wards, special Christmas dinners and so forth being the order of the day. In this specially appreciated work, throughout the country, the C. A. H. must, as usual, thank its volunteer workers, especially the ladies, whose self-denying services seemed redoubled at this most festive and essentially "home" season of the year and no words can describe what the hours of holiday time, borrowed from their own homes and dear ones and gladly given to the military hospital wards, meant to the patients.

The C. A. H. also decided to hand each patient a special Christmas gift and a plan for the giving of these individual presents was duly formulated. It was desired to make the Knights' little gift to "the boys" as attractive and useful as possible. After a full consideration of what would be most acceptable and at the same time useful to the patients, it was concluded that the most appreciated form of present would be an individual box containing the following articles: Duplex safety razor with extra blades, shaving brush and a stick of shaving soap, toothbrush with tube of tooth paste, package of cigarettes, matchbox holder, chocolate bar, chiclets, linen handerchief and a book of short stories. The articles were packed in an attractive box bearing the crest of the C. A. H. As 9,768 of these special gifts were required at Christmas, 1919, in order that each military patient in Canada might receive one, it will readily be seen that the packing alone of this number of boxes was no mean task.

Once more the members of the Montreal Ladies' Auxiliary came to the rescue, and for some days they were very much in evidence at Phillips Square Hut; with the result that what at the outset had seemed a rather stupen-

dous undertaking was, through their zeal and energy, very quickly accomplished.

A quantity of these special gifts was then shipped to the Chairman of our Hospital Committees at all the larger points; the quantities varying according to the number of patients to be served. In a few isolated cases, where the patients were few in number, these gifts were shipped to the hospital authorities for distribution.

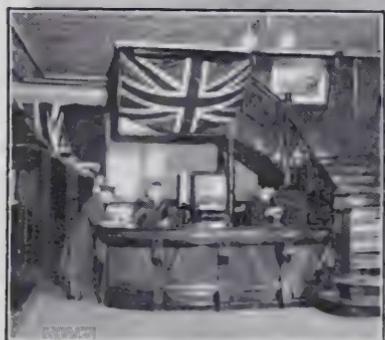
In the majority of cases, the distribution of the boxes was made an occasion of real festivity for the hospitals concerned. The leading military and civil authorities were invited to assist and they, as well as the hospital staffs, were no less impressed than the patients themselves with K. of C. generosity. In addition to the actual handing of these gifts to the men, concert programmes were arranged and short addresses delivered by prominent personages among the guests and representatives of the Catholic Army Huts. By this means, the sick and wounded were made conscious of the genuine wish of the Knights to develop personal interest in the hospitals, in addition to the provision of gift boxes at Christmas and other donations during the year.

Christmas, 1920, saw the number of military patients reduced to 6,390 and special gifts boxes containing comb, stick of shaving soap, tooth brush and a tube of tooth paste, chocolate bar, package of chiclets, package of cigarettes, box of matches, linen handkerchief and a pack of playing cards were distributed to the number of 6,190.

The packing of these gifts was, as in the previous year, done by the members of the Montreal Ladies' Auxiliary some of whose members spent hours daily at Lafontaine Council club house engaged in this work. The distribution of these gifts was carried out in the same manner as in 1919.

In addition to the 6,190 special gifts above mentioned, the C. A. H. donated, by special request, 200 fountain pens to the military patients of a large Sanatorium.

In closing this chapter, but little remains to be said. As far as possible, the activities among the military and D. S. C. R. hospitals in the various districts throughout Canada, have all been touched on. It is impossible to do full justice to those who have given so unstintingly of their time and service to the carrying out of this great charge. Space only allows a bare statement of facts and here and there an incident quoted as an example of the class of work accomplished. Devotion to the service of others has its own fascination and there are many men and women in Canada to-day who, having been intimately associated with the hospital work of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts since its inception, have found a deep and lasting interest in the care of the sick and wounded.



1. Kitchen in one of the K. of C. Huts in Canada.
2. Soldier registering in a K. of C. Hut in Canada.
3. K. of C. Hut in Canada is headquarters of a soldiers' football team.
4. A sample of the many free canteens in the K. of C. Huts.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BONNE ENTENTE.

DURING the latter years of the war thousands of Canadians were returned from overseas, as casualties from the various services, for treatment and discharge in various parts of the Dominion. As their numbers grew they formed the foundation of the country's population of returned men and so there came into being various organizations and clubs, whose object was to unite the veterans with a view to helping one another in their civil re-establishment problems and to provide club facilities for them during their leisure hours. By the time of the signing of the Armistice, these societies were well developed and mostly operating on a fairly broad scale throughout the country. When the Catholic Army Huts transferred their activities from overseas to Canada, it was therefore felt that whenever the opportunity presented itself the fullest co-operation should be extended to these bodies for the furtherance of their particular lines of activity which, while in no manner conflicting with the work of the C. A. H., were undoubtedly of great benefit to the soldiers.

The Catholic Army Huts early recognized that these returned men's organizations had a very important rôle to play in the passing of the Dominion from a war-time to a peace-time footing. Their efforts, often in the face of considerable difficulties, won them the regard of the Canadian public at a very early date and the C. A. H. saw that in them there was a ready means of practically assisting the men. The ways in which the C. A. H. co-operated with these organizations were many and varied: furniture was donated to newly established clubs, concerts, field-days, picnics and other outings for the men were financed by the C. A. H. and substantial cash advances were made.

From one end of the Dominion to the other the best of relations were always maintained by this means.

The men were placed in a position to organize amusements for themselves and so kept occupied during the trying days between discharge from the service and re-employment in civilian life. It is not too much to say that by means of the club arrangements among the veterans themselves and through the services of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, many thousands of discharged soldiers and sailors were kept happy and maintained in a state of efficient citizenship in spite of the social and economic difficulties of the country, following the great international upheaval of 1914-1918.

To the same end—the practical assistance of all veterans—the work of the Catholic Army Huts did not stop at the putting into effect of the original programme of opening hostels and offices in all the large centres from coast to coast. It was felt that there were a considerable number of points of smaller population where the activities of the C. A. H. would be of material benefit to the veterans and it was decided to extend the work to these localities directly through the Councils of the Knights of Columbus.

The Grand Knights of the Canadian Councils were all communicated with by the Comptroller's office of the Catholic Army Huts; the situation carefully explained to them and a request made for the surveying of their respective territories and the appointing of a Returned Soldiers' Committee in each Council where it seemed likely that practical good might be done in the neighbourhood. It was made clear that the personnel of this Committee should consist of members of the Council with good business ability and a working knowledge of military routine and should include, wherever possible, a Justice of the Peace, Commissioner of the Superior Court, or some other official empowered with the certifying of affidavits, etc. This was all done in order that there might be a minimum of delay in handling the cases of the returned soldiers and sailors as they came before the Committee.

Coincident with the establishment of Returned Soldiers' Committees, the matter of the extension of C. A. H.

activities was taken up with the Dominion Government through the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment. It was decided to do whatever might be possible to cope with the unemployment problem, both directly and by reporting vacant positions to the various offices of the Information and Service Branch of the D. S. C. R., which in its turn offered co-operation in placing any returned men which might be referred to its officers by the Knights of Columbus.

Whenever possible, recreational work was also developed through these Committees. In this branch of the work it was found possible at a large number of points to co-operate with the various returned soldiers' organizations, which frequently arranged the setting of entertainments financed by the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts. At points where the soldier bodies were not so active, the Councils themselves provided entertainment for the men through the services of their members and their friends. In the succeeding pages of this chapter there will be found a number of examples of the class of work conducted in this line in various Provinces of the Dominion.

These amusements were, in a number of cases, extended to include the various hospitals in the different areas where returned men were undergoing treatment and convalescence and such local wounded as were well enough to attend were always honored guests at all the C. A. H. functions.

The response to the original letter of invitation to co-operate with the C. A. H. was very gratifying, some sixty returned Soldiers' Committees being established. In this connection it must be remembered that the large centres and their immediate neighbourhoods were well covered with permanent Huts and Offices; that there were a number of localities where the returned men were few and such as they were rapidly absorbed in the civilian life of the community. Taken all in all, it may be said that the ground was thoroughly covered and that

nothing was left undone to make the activities efficient in every respect.

The following are summaries of the work accomplished at various points: Patriotic citizens in **Amherst, N.S.**, co-operated with the local returned men's organizations and the local Knights of Columbus in staging a banquet to all the ex-service men of the neighbourhood. The event took place in July 1919, the K. of C. sharing in the preparations and also in the banquet itself. It was a tremendous success and a team of young ladies wearing the Catholic Army Huts badge saw to it that the men who attended as guests lacked nothing in the line of smoking supplies. A permanent record, telling how some five hundred veterans were entertained, was compiled by a local Committee and deposited in the Town Hall. This story included the part played by the Knights of Columbus in the entertainment and will be preserved in the official records of Amherst for the information of coming generations.

**Glace Bay, N. S.**, during the winter of 1919-20, was the scene of considerable activity on the part of the Knights of Columbus, who did all in their power to be of service to the returned men of the neighbourhood. The Returned Soldiers' Committee of the local Council was responsible for the organizing of a most successful concert, the bill being composed entirely of numbers by obliging amateurs and was enjoyed by about a hundred returned men.

The Catholic Army Huts made a donation of five hundred dollars towards the Great War Veterans Association Memorial Hall at **Sydney Mines, N. S.**, and also subscribed five hundred dollars towards the erection of a Soldiers' Memorial at **Rimouski, Que.**

In **Sydney, N. S.**, the work of the local Returned Soldiers' Committee was naturally restricted owing to the number of demobilized men in the area and partook largely of the nature of relief work. The district was carefully surveyed and cases of genuine distress were

singled out for special attention by the Committee. Hampers were sent out to families of various needy soldiers at Christmas time and the Committee endeavoured at all times to be of practical help in the giving out of clothing, fuel and comforts. The best of relations were maintained with the local G. W. V. A. and smokes of various kinds were supplied for different entertainments.

The local branches of the G. W. V. A. at **Antigonish, Baddock, Canso, Inverness, Mulgrave and Port Hood, N.S.**, were each supplied with baseball outfits for the use of their members.

**Montreal** was naturally a point of considerable activity in the matter of co-operation with returned men's societies, apart from the regular work carried on by the C. A. H. Through the Comptroller's Office, through which all expenditures in the interest of returned men's clubs throughout the country passed, practically every organization for ex-service men in Montreal at some time or other was aided financially or otherwise.

The Sherbrooke Street Hut, very shortly after its opening, became the headquarters of the French-Canadian Section of the local G. W. V. A., pending the acquisition of quarters of its own. When these were obtained furniture was donated and financial assistance was given to the branch.

Co-operation was also closely maintained with the English-speaking G. W. V. A. branch in Montreal and the C. A. H. assisted in making a success of various functions held under G. W. V. A. auspices and also supported the work of the branch generally. Reference is made elsewhere to the banquet tendered the delegates attending the Dominion Convention of the Great War Veterans Association held in Montreal in March 1920. This banquet took place in the spacious hall of the Lafontaine Council and was one of the outstanding events of Montreal's activities. G. W. V. A. delegates from coast to coast were present to the number of over three

hundred and were treated to an excellent meal, followed by speeches and songs—making a memorable evening.

The local branch of the Army and Navy Veterans was presented with a billiard table, the upkeep of which was also provided for. Furniture, largely composed of chairs and tables, was also donated in sufficient quantity to go a long way towards equipping the club rooms.

The French Soldiers' Society, "Le Sac au Dos", was given beds and blankets, tables, chairs, cutlery and kitchen equipment for its hostel at St. Adele, Que. and also financially assisted. Help of practical nature was also given to Vimy Post of the Grand Army of Canada.

Last but by no means least, assistance was given to the Last Post Society for the burial of soldiers dying in needy circumstances. In addition to generous financial support, flowers were sent on occasions of the various decoration ceremonies held by the Society.

An outstanding feature of C. A. H. co-operation in Montreal was evidenced in the foundation of the Memorial Workshops for disabled soldiers and sailors. The problem of training severely disabled men was found to be a very grave one and in certain instances, even when trained, it was found very difficult to find them employment in regular shops. The Red Cross and the Catholic Army Huts therefore agreed to finance a scheme to remedy this difficulty.

A property was acquired in a suitable location and fitted up with the necessary machinery. Instructors were provided by the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment and the Shops put into operation, turning out all kinds of wood and basketwork, including furniture generally, lamps, wicker chairs, etc. These articles were marketed to the trade and special orders were executed for individuals, the revenue thus acquired going towards the defraying of the expenses of operation and material. Many men who would otherwise have been unable to obtain either training or employment were cared for through the Memorial Workshops,

towards which the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts subscribed some fifteen thousand dollars.

Dominion Day 1919, in **Alexandria, Ont.**, was marked by a banquet tendered to some six hundred ex-service men of the neighbourhood. A Committee of the Knights of Columbus was very active throughout the preparations and arranged for the supplying of all the cutlery needed for the occasion. The Catholic Army Huts provided ample "smokes" for all and also took a portion of the general expenses.

The ex-soldiers, sailors and airmen of **Cornwall, Ont.** and the surrounding neighbourhood, will always look back to February 16th, 1920, as a red-letter day. The local Returned Soldiers' Committee, feeling that some public function should be held to bring the ex-service men of the district together, got in touch with the local G. W. V. A. and arranged for an evening in the K. of C. Club, some 250 men being present as guests.

The entertainment took the form of a banquet tendered by the Catholic Army Huts, at which the Chairman of the Returned Soldiers' Committee presided and welcomed the guests. Speeches were made by representatives of the G. W. V. A., senior military officers of the district, civic authorities and representatives of the Catholic Army Huts. A number of young ladies, dressed as Red Cross nurses, waited on table and later served as partners for the boys in a dance which followed. The programme was augmented by vocal and instrumental selections by amateur performers, while an up-to-date jazz band was in attendance for the dancing. The whole affair was undoubtedly the most successful event of its kind held in Cornwall.

Co-operating with various soldiers' societies, the Catholic Army Huts arranged to supply all that was needed for a most successful smoking concert for all veterans in the neighbourhood of **Belleville, Ont.**, in February 1920. The mayor and a number of prominent citizens were present, the programme was all that could be wished and

the whole evening's proceedings much appreciated by all the guests.

In **Toronto, Ont.**, the Catholic Army Huts spared no efforts to be of assistance to the Amputation Association, composed of amputation cases from among war veterans. A substantial cash donation was made at the time of the society's organization in Toronto and a quantity of athletic supplies was also furnished.

In **St. Catharines, Ont.**, the C. A. H. supplied all the cigarettes, pipes and tobacco and cigars which were used at a banquet for returned men by the local G. W. V. A.

Hennepin Council, K. of C. at **Niagara Falls, Ont.**, entertained some three hundred ex-service men in January 1920 in its own quarters. Cards and other games, music and a buffet supper went towards the spending of a pleasant evening by all the guests. Needless to say there were plenty of "smokes" for everybody. The entire proceedings were financed by the Catholic Army Huts and arranged by the local members of the Order.

Some nine hundred ex-soldiers and sailors were the guests of a committee of the citizens of **Ingersoll, Ont.**, at an elaborate open air entertainment held in June 1920. The programme included sports of all kinds, three bands were in attendance and apart from the men and their families, many prominent citizens were on hand, making the event one of the greatest local interest. The Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts made a handsome cash contribution and also supplied refreshments and cigarettes, all of which services were very much appreciated.

Arrangements were made through the local Knights of Columbus, financed by the Catholic Army Huts for a most successful picnic at **Woodstock, Ont.**, in August 1920. All that went to the making of a successful entertainment for some seven hundred ex-service men was

furnished by the C. A. H. and a most enjoyable day was spent by all who attended.

Kilroy Council, in **Stratford, Ont.**, formed a Returned Soldiers' Committee for the purpose of looking after the veterans of the district, but found that the ground was already pretty well covered by various organizations of returned men.

There were, however, quite a number of families in the City from which the breadwinner had been taken in the toll of war. The Committee made arrangements to hold a Christmas Tree for these unfortunates and through the kindness of the municipal authorities the use of the City Hall was obtained for the function, which was attended by the Mayor and a number of prominent citizens.

Forty-six war-widows and one hundred and twenty-eight children who had lost their fathers in the country's service were invited to be the guests of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts on this occasion. The proceedings were conducted by the Committee from the Council, headed by Santa Claus, who had a gift for each guest. The children were delighted with the good things provided for them, while each mother was given a pair of fat chickens to help fill the pot on Christmas Day.

In the summer of 1920 a gathering of returned men and their families was held in Stratford, organized by a local Returned Soldiers' Association. The Catholic Army Huts furnished all the refreshments required for this entertainment, as well as cigarettes, and provided the prizes for the games held. Some eight hundred ex-service men took part in this function, which was regarded as most successful by all who were interested in it.

In **Windsor, Ont.**, the Knights of Columbus co-operated with the local branch of the Great War Veterans Association in the furnishing of their club quarters and supplied the orchestra for the official opening. In addition to this work for the men, some sixty hampers were sent out to soldiers' families at Christmas time both in

1919 and 1920, the cases being chosen after careful investigation. The Club was presented with a large victrola and an ample supply of records.

**Collingwood's** most outstanding veterans' celebration took the form of a huge open air festival, with sports and amusements of all kinds. This was organized by the different returned men's clubs of the district and the Catholic Army Huts in addition to helping in various otherways,supplied all the cigarettes used on this occasion.

The main social event of the Knights of Columbus activities for returned soldiers in **Cobalt, Ont.**, took place on April 22nd, 1920, when some four hundred were invited to be the guests of the local Council's Returned Soldiers' Committee at a banquet. This event in common with others of a similar nature throughout the country, was the occasion of much interchange of good fellowship between members of the Order and the veterans and the sentiments expressed on both sides spoke well for the good relations established by the Catholic Army Huts both Overseas and in Canada.

The operation of a Returned Soldiers' Committee by the K. of C. Council at **Chapleau, Ont.**, was not found to be necessary, owing to the fact that the veterans of the district had rapidly settled down into civilian life once more and also had a number of organizations of their own. It was decided by the local Committee of the Knights of Columbus, however, that it would be very appropriate to give each of the local veterans a permanent token of appreciation of his services in the war and arrangements were accordingly made to have medals supplied by the Catholic Army Huts and publicly presented to 244 returned soldiers. These medals were engraved with the men's name on the reverse, and bore the arms of the C. A. H. and a suitable inscription on the front.

In Saskatchewan, as throughout the Western Provinces, very close co-operation was at all times maintained with

the Great War Veterans Association through its various branches.

In **Regina** it was recognized that the local G.W.V.A. was doing much needed work and as the Catholic Army Huts had no hostel at this point, it was decided to assist the veterans in the furnishing of their Club. A handsome donation of furniture was made, including beds and bedding, armchairs, rugs, mats, mirrors, etc., as well as all kinds of indoor and outdoor games for the use of the men.

The **Moose Jaw** Knights of Columbus established a fine record of service to ex-soldiers and sailors all through the summer of 1920 and the ensuing colder months. Several highly successful picnics were organized and the season was fittingly rounded off by a big summer outing to which all the returned men in the vicinity were invited. The average attendance at these events was about four hundred. When the cooler weather set in two concerts by local amateurs were provided for the veterans, who attended to the number of some two hundred on each occasion.

In **Medicine Hat, Alta.**, the Catholic Army Huts through the local Council of the Knights of Columbus, tendered a complimentary banquet to the Provincial Executive of the G. W. V. A. The function was very well attended and was an outstanding success in every way. The recreational and social section of the local Great War Veterans Association Club House was almost completely furnished by the C. A. H., no expense being spared to make the rooms comfortable and attractive.

A full-sized English billiard table was donated to the club rooms of the Great War Veterans Association in **Lethbridge, Alta.**

The reader will note, in the chapter devoted to the activities of the C. A. H. in the Province of Alberta, that the G. W. V. A. worked hand in hand with the Knights of Columbus in the interests of returned men. As a permanent and practical token of appreciation of this

co-operation, the lounge of the G. W. V. A. Club in **Edmonton** is furnished in a manner not to be surpassed by the equipment of any up-to-date club in the country.

Arrangements were made by the Catholic Army Huts to conclude their activities in **Victoria, B. C.** on April 30th, 1920, to coincide with the general closing of the Huts throughout the Dominion; but urgent requests were sent to the head office by the returned men in that city that the work be continued, as it was much needed and sincerely appreciated by them.

The situation was investigated by the local Committee of the Catholic Army Huts and it was found that several thousand more returned men had been discharged in Victoria than the total enlistments at that point and that, in consequence, the unemployment situation was particularly acute. It was recommended that a request previously received from the Great War Veterans Association, be acceded to and that the entire equipment of the Victoria Hut be turned over to them in order to put them in a position to assist the ex-service men of the district.

On further investigation it was found that it was the intention of the G. W. V. A. to continue their activities in this line for an indefinite period and the whole Hut furnishings and fittings, including tableware, etc., were accordingly turned over to the G. W. V. A. on the distinct understanding that the Club would be open to all ex-service men regardless of race or creed, in exactly the same manner as when operated by the Catholic Army Huts. This stipulation was readily complied with and the ex-Secretary of the Hut was installed as manager of the G. W. V. A. Club, which was still in operation at the date of publication of this book.

The foregoing is but a brief outline of the accomplishments of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts in co-operation with various returned men's bodies. All that it was possible to achieve with or in the best



1



2



3



4



1. L. A. Giroux, Edmonton, Alberta,  
Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1918-19-  
20.

2. J. D. O'Connell, Victoria, B. C.,  
Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1918-19-  
20.

3. W. T. Kernahan, Toronto, Ont.  
Overseas Commissioner, K. of C.  
C.A.H.

4. Wm. Brennan, Kamloops, B. C.,  
Director K. of C. C.A.H., 1921-22.



## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

interests of these organizations was done, regardless of any reasonable expense incurred. There are many clubs in various parts of the Dominion to-day whose furnishings will, for years to come, bear testimony to the good feeling existing between the organizations which own them and the C. A. H. who donated them. It is pleasing to be able to state that 4,791 men were placed in positions in various parts of Canada.

Letters of appreciation from the various associations are filed in the records of the C. A. H. These are eloquent in their way; but the lasting gratitude of the men themselves, individually and collectively, is the most treasured remembrance of these busy days. The Catholic Army Huts are proud to have been associated with the various veterans' societies throughout the country and glad to have been of assistance to them in their excellent work.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### ACTIVITIES AMONG FOREIGN FORCES.

"**E**VERYTHING for the Returned Man", regardless of race or creed, was the aim and motto of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts at all periods of their activities and so it would be an injustice to omit from their life's story the tale of what was done for the soldiers and sailors of nations other than those included in the British Empire.

Service in the naval, military or air forces of any of the allied nations was at all times a warranty of the best and kindest efforts of the Catholic Army Huts. All that was available for British service men was equally available to those who had fought side by side with them in the great struggle; there was absolutely no line of distinction —unless indeed that the strangers were almost invariably the object of perhaps more than ordinary attention and hospitality on the part of the Knights. There was not a Hut which, at some time in the course of its history, did not house representatives of other nations' armies or navies. The majority were, naturally, Americans; but it was surprising how many other nationalities found their way into the ever open doors of the hostels in the various countries in which they were operated.

Apart from this general contact with our friends and allies, there were a number of occasions on which the Knights of Columbus set out to develop special activities for the benefit of foreign forces and the instances outlined in this chapter will serve as examples of the sterling spirit of goodwill and service in which this work was carried on. The cases cited refer only to Canada; but it must be remembered that the Catholic Army Huts overseas, notably in London, housed countless number of strangers in the ordinary course of their daily routine.

There are, to-day, many permanent records of the gratitude of foreign soldiers and sailors to the Knight of Columbus for services rendered, in the form of letters

of appreciation and permanent tokens of other kinds. Perhaps the most eloquent testimonial of all is that the men for whom the K. of C. gladly did all that it was possible to do, have gone back to their native countries with a warm and friendly recollection of Canada and Canadians. This, in itself, amply repays the efforts of the Catholic Army Huts and of the members of the Order and their friends who helped to carry on this most excellent branch of the activities.

A bare summary only of the work done is possible here; but the following incidents, taken in the majority of cases from local newspaper reports, speak for themselves.

French warships, engaged in their grim business on the Atlantic, frequently came into the port of **Halifax** to coal and for other purposes. On all such occasions, the officers and crews were always made welcome by K. of C. representatives and became the guests of the local Hut during the period of their stay. Whatever entertainments were going on in and in connection with the Catholic Army Huts were open to the visitors and those unable to come ashore were constantly supplied with cigarettes and other welcome gifts from the hostel.

The City of **Quebec** was particularly active in the entertainment of foreign forces. In the winter of 1919-20 a flotilla of Eagle Boats on its way from Detroit to join various sections of the U. S. fleet, being unable to complete the voyage down the St. Lawrence owing to the sudden freezing over of the river, wintered in Quebec and was the object of the best attentions of the Knights of Columbus through the medium of the Quebec Council.

In addition to the supplying of comforts and games of all kinds for the men, concerts were given monthly by the members of the Council in co-operation with the officers and men of the ships and these, coupled with a liberal supply of refreshments on each occasion, went a long way towards making the visitors' sojourn in the Ancient Capital a pleasant one.

The Council was untiring in its efforts to look after the men. Under an indefatigable Grand Knight, the members worked with a will to make the strangers feel at home, giving up the entire ground floor of the Council to their use, as well as the basement of the building, equipped with shower baths and bowling alleys. The men were thus never at a loss for a place to spend their time—reading and writing, playing billiards or bowling.

A lasting tribute to the Council for its true services to the American sailors, stands in the Quebec Council to-day in the form of a large silver cup, suitably inscribed, commemorating the hospitality enjoyed by the U. S. tars at the hands of the Knights of Columbus.

In the summer of 1919, Quebec again put itself in the limelight in K. of C. activities, by providing a day's entertainment for some 3,000 Czecho-Slovak soldiers camped at Valcartier on their way home from Siberia.

The Grand Knight invited representatives from all the patriotic societies in the city to attend a meeting in Columbus Hall for the purpose of organizing a reception for the visiting Allies. Various parts of the day's programme were undertaken by different bodies, the Knights doing their share by assuming the responsibility of the rationing and entertainment of the men during their visit to the Ancient Capital.

Lunch was served, in both the Drill Hall and the Exhibition Grounds, to the troops on their arrival from the camp and a committee, comprising a large number of energetic ladies, looked after the table arrangements. After the meal each man was provided with a supply of cigarettes and the various units then marched through the streets of the city, an event which will long be remembered by Quebecers.

One of the finest entertainments given in **Montreal** during the history of the Catholic Army Huts, was the complimentary banquet tendered to the sailors of the French gunboat "la Ville d'Ys", on the occasion of its

visit to the port in connection with the unveiling of a monument to Dollard des Ormeaux, on June 23rd, 1920. The function took place in the large concert-hall of Lafontaine Council, which was tastefully decorated for the occasion, when the ship's crew, as well as representatives of various returned soldiers' organizations, partook of an excellent dinner presided over by the District Deputy of the Knights of Columbus.

To say that the sailors enjoyed themselves would be putting it very mildly. In the very centre of the French Canadian section of the City, with their mother-tongue being spoken all around them, they were perfectly at their ease and spent an evening which will long be remembered by all whose privilege it was to be present.

The speeches of the evening were proceeding according to programme, when it was notified that the officers of the ship, who were being feted elsewhere, were on their way to join their men. As soon as they entered the hall, the orchestra struck up "La Marseillaise" and the entire assembly swung to its feet and, lustily led by the sailors, singing only as Frenchmen can sing it, joined in the French national anthem. The scene at this moment was one unique in the history of the Huts and of the Order and will go down as an epoch-marking event in the records of both.

Addresses were given by representatives of the Order, local French organizations, Canadian veterans' associations and of various public bodies. The Comptroller of the C. A. H. said a few fitting words to the men and a brief reply was made by the officer commanding the warship.

The men who were obliged to remain on board, in their course of duty, were not forgotten and a generous supply of eatables and smokes, similar to the menu of the banquet, was provided for them.

It fell to the lot of the Knights of Columbus of **Brandon** and their friends to render what is probably one of the most unique war services accomplished in Canada.

During the summer of 1919, a large number of Chinese coolies, from the native labour battalions which did such good work behind the lines in France, were sent back to their native land, via Canada. The trains stopped at Brandon and the local Committee of the Catholic Army Huts immediately grasped the opportunity of doing a good turn for the strangers. "Everything for the Returned Man"—regardless of color, race or creed—had ever been the slogan of the C. A. H. and the work done on the trains carrying the Chinese labour troops homeward was certainly an outstanding example of it.

According to information gained from the Canadian officers in charge, the Orientals had plenty of money, but mainly in French currency, which the various vendors of smokes and provisions at the different stopping-places had been unwilling to accept as legal tender. The passengers, therefore, were short of many little comforts, especially cigarettes and were most appreciative of the efforts of the Catholic Army Huts to remedy their difficulties.

Huge quantities of cigarettes were distributed to the men, who speedily recognized the brands and by a mixture of pidgin-English, interspersed with many unrecognizable words in their own dialects, voiced their approval of the proceedings.

The C. A. H. received most comprehensive thanks, both verbally and in writing, from the train-conducting officers for the services rendered.

On the Pacific Coast, as on the Atlantic, the Catholic Army Huts were frequently in touch with members of the United States navy. **Victoria** gave a splendid example of the warm welcome which was at all times extended to U. S. service men when, in the late summer of 1919, a squadron of warships under Admiral Rodman visited the port. Arrangements were made by wireless for the Knights of Columbus to act as hosts to the men on their arrival and a special programme was drafted for their entertainment.

Some two hundred automobiles and tally-hos met the sailors on disembarkation at the wharf and took them for a tour around the city and vicinity. A generous supply of smokes was provided by the Catholic Army Huts for the men, both in the automobiles and at other points later in the afternoon and also for the men who were unable to leave the ships.

At the close of the tour, tickets were distributed for a special performance at one of the local theatres in the evening. During the interval, the men patronized the Hut and amused themselves there and elsewhere in whatever manner appealed to them. After the theatre in the evening, the autos were again on hand to take them back to the docks, whence they returned to their respective ships anchored in the harbour. Some 15,000 U. S. sailors were thus looked after by the K. of C. of Victoria, in one day.

From the foregoing, it will be easily seen that the policy of the Catholic Army Huts, of making war-service the sole requisite for the sharing of the benefits of their activities, was strictly adhered to and that service men, from all corners of the world, were equally welcome to all that the Knights of Columbus could do for them.

In the late summer of 1919 several French ships' crews, averaging some forty men each, arrived in succession in Victoria to take over boats which had been built there for French interests. These sailors were, without exception, veterans of one or other of the French services and as such, were tendered the hospitality of the Fort Street Hut.

Entertainments were also arranged for them, concerts being organized by local amateurs and other amusements provided both by the Hut authorities and by patriotic Victoria citizens particularly interested in work for France.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### ACTIVITIES AMONG PERMANENT FORCES.

ALTHOUGH their primary object was to be of assistance to the huge army of citizen-soldiers which represented Canada in the Great Adventure, the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts nevertheless found, on the cessation of hostilities, that there was a genuine opportunity for the carrying on of their activities among those with whom soldiering was a permanent and chosen walk in life.

The Canadian Permanent Forces in war-time were represented in Canada only by members of the various instructional cadres of the different branches of the service. The units proper were merged when overseas, with the sole exception of the cavalry, into the great Canadian Expeditionary Force. The fine record of the Canadian Cavalry in the ranks of the Imperial Army is far too outstanding a feature of war history to need any comment here.

When the war was ended, however, and the regulars, in common with their citizen brothers-in-arms, returned to Canada, their homecoming to a period of peace-time service was very little different from that of those who went through demobilization. Permanent force barracks throughout the country had been occupied by many different units. The sacred traditions and household gods of the various stations were practically unknown to the volunteer units quartered there during the war and the constant movement of troops through these points did not in any way tend to better their condition. The result was that in many instances the permanent units found their old homes cheerless enough on their return from active service.

It was precisely in cases of this sort that the K. of C. Catholic Army Huts were able to be of genuine service. No task was too great to be undertaken and in the majority of cases the various units were supplied with all they

asked for, much to their satisfaction. The work covered a wide range, as the following instances will serve to show.

When "A" Squadron of the Royal Canadian Dragoons returned to their home quarters in **St. Johns, P. Q.**, they found them very much the same as when they left but sadly lacking in the comforts which the cavalrymen had been accustomed to before the war. The place had not been occupied by cavalry for over four years and there was much needed for the comfort of all ranks.

The Catholic Army Huts were called on to assist in putting things into shape and with the co-operation of the officers of the local Council of the Order, the Dragoons submitted a list of their requirements.

Arrangements were made to supply the most needed articles without delay and in a surprisingly short space of time, St. Johns Barracks had resumed a considerable proportion of its peace-time aspect. The recreation rooms for the officers, N. C. O.s and men, were naturally the greatest care of the C. A. H., and were almost completely outfitted with a generous donation of furniture, including armchairs, writing desks, gramophones and records, a pool table and an English billiard table. Games of all kinds were also supplied.

Outdoor athletic supplies were also much needed and baseball, cricket and football sets were provided, so that there might be no dearth of outdoor amusements for the men.

At the time that the quarters were being equipped, it was explained that the Catholic Army Huts were ready at all times to assist in entertainments which might be arranged for the men and a large stock of smoking materials was shipped out to be used at a concert which was organized some few weeks later. Representatives of the St. Johns Council and of the Catholic Army Huts were invited to attend this gathering, at which all the troops quartered in St. Johns were present.

Further interest in the cavalry was evidenced in the summer of 1920 when the Royal Canadian Dragoons



1. K. of C. Hut at Petawawa Military Camp, Petawawa, Ont.
2. Billiard room in one of the K. of C. Huts.
3. Corner of a reading-room in one of the K. of C. Huts.
4. Exterior view of the K. of C. Hut at London, Ont.



went under canvas for eight weeks at **Petawawa, Ont.**

The Returned Soldiers' Committee of Pembroke Council took matters in hand and the Catholic Army Huts established a canteen in the camp, which was maintained throughout the training period. Cigarettes, tobacco, chocolate bars, fresh fruit, ice cream and other supplies were sold to the troops at cost. From this canteen, too, came the refreshments which were distributed free of charge among the men at the various sports and field days held during the camp.

The recreation hall which was operated in connection with the K. of C. Canteen, also proved very popular and its piano served as "orchestra" for a number of very successful impromptu entertainments. A piano was likewise supplied for the officers' quarters and two victrolas were donated to the Dragoons, with a supply of records.

Athletics were strongly encouraged by the donation of complete baseball and cricket outfits, also football supplies; while in two fortunate stations of the Royal Canadian Dragoons, now hang the two handsome silver shields which were presented by the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts for competition at the inter-squadron sports held at Petawawa.

The Royal Canadian Regiment fared very little better than the cavalry in the matter of quarters, for very shortly after its return from the war, the unit was transferred from its old station in Halifax to **Montreal** and quartered in Peel Street Barracks, which had been used as quarters for troops during the war and as a dispersal station for demobilization purposes, but had never been occupied by a permanent unit.

The regiment marched in some eight hundred strong and with the happy facility of the soldier man, adapted itself as rapidly as possible to its new surroundings with the greatest cheerfulness. There were many things needed, however, for the comfort of the men and these

the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts gladly supplied. It was found that the regimental library was badly in need of reading matter; so the C. A. H. at once placed this important recreational department on a proper footing by donating a generous supply of books, periodicals and stationery.

The sporting end of the soldiers' play-time was materially bettered by the gift of a complete outfit for the regimental hockey team and baseball, football, cricket and others athletic goods.

Shortly after the unit got settled down in its new home, it was ordered into quarantine due to a couple of infectious cases which had broken out and had been removed to isolation. This was, of course, a most trying period for all ranks. The Knights, realizing this, redoubled their efforts to be of assistance by increasing the supply of daily newspapers to one hundred and furnishing large quantities of cigarettes and games.

In the early summer of 1920, the R. C. R. left Montreal for **Valcartier Camp** for training and here again was kept supplied with various C. A. H. "comforts" through the regimental canteen and provided with donations of athletic equipment. A piano was also supplied for the regiment's use.

At the close of the camp, the unit was for a short time quartered in **London, Ont.**, and later partly distributed, by companies, through the Military Districts of Eastern Canada.

One company remained at Wolseley Barracks, London, Ont. and received from the C. A. H. complete outfits for cricket, tennis and football. Two billiard tables were also re-covered and placed in first class condition for this unit.

The other companies comprising the regiment, were divided amongst **Montreal**, **Toronto** and **Halifax**, and the C. A. H. kept in close touch with these various units. Sporting supplies, a victrola and a liberal

donation of gramophone records were given to the company at Stanley Barracks, Toronto, while the men in Montreal were provided with a billiard table and various other smaller indoor games.

**Quebec**, Canada's oldest garrison town, fell to the lot of the Royal Canadian Artillery and the newly-organized Permanent Force unit, the 22nd French-Canadian Regiment. The Gunners were supplied with a large quantity of furniture for their recreation rooms, including sets of curtains, armchairs, gramophones, billiard fixtures and games; while each of the two companies of the 22nd Regiment was completely outfitted with athletic supplies and also with stationery and furnishings for the reading rooms.

The Royal Canadian Engineers also had a detachment at this station and were supplied with a hockey outfit and a quantity of baseball supplies. Another unit of the same arm of the service, located in **Winnipeg**, was presented with a victrola and records and various indoor and outdoor athletic supplies.

The Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, in **Kingston, Ont.**, were not forgotten and were given a complete indoor baseball set.

Developed from practically nothing to a huge organization during the course of the war, the Machine Gun Corps had no permanent quarters in Canada to return to and when, on the cessation of hostilities, the first Canadian Machine Gun Brigade was allotted a large hall in **Montreal**, for its home, there was naturally much needed to put the place in comfortable shape for the men. The Catholic Army Huts, in this particular instance, practically furnished the armoury, donating a billiard table, a supply of armchairs, tables and other furniture and a quantity of athletic supplies.

The Royal Canadian Air Force, at **Camp Borden, Ont.**, were supplied with a donation including gramophone records, a supply of books and athletic outfits of various kinds.

In the summer of 1921, a considerable number of the re-organized units of the Canadian Militia were ordered under canvas at various points. These camps, under the authority of the Military Districts in which they were located, were well attended and the Catholic Army Huts decided to again operate canteens for the accommodation of the men, wherever the Military Authorities wished it.

Tents in the camps at **Fredericton** and **Sussex**, N. B., were popular resorts for the soldiers. Everything was sold at cost and on the sports and field days generous free supplies of cigarettes, soft drinks, candy and other delicacies were made to the troops.

**Pointe Aux Trembles**, Que., a few miles east of Montreal, was chosen as the site of the Infantry Camp for units in Military District No. 4. An up-to-the minute canteen, with a veteran of the famous 22nd (French-Canadian) Battalion as Secretary, was operated throughout the training period. This camp was occupied immediately after the departure of the Militia units by the various Cadet Corps from Montreal, Three Rivers and the Eastern Townships. The C. A. H., in conjunction with the Y. M. C. A., looked after all the sports arrangements for the young soldiers, providing equipment whenever it was needed.

**Wiarton**, Ont., also had a C. A. H. Canteen in its camp throughout the training period.

The Canadian Artillery, training in relays at **London**, Ont., were also cared for through a C. A. H. Canteen, which was operated as long as the camp was open.

Statistics of the exact donations to the various units of the Canadina Permanent Forces will be found elsewhere in this volume; but the foregoing will serve to show that the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts were at all times genuinely interested in the various Stations throughout Canada and ready to supply whatever might happen to be needed for the comfort and well-being of all ranks.

### **Appendix One**

#### **"A WORKER ADDS HER WORD"**

(*Extract from the Diary of a "C. W. L. Lady," London, June, 1919.*)

**T**HIS, our last day of "Hut Work" in England, as we close the doors of the dear old Club,—is one of the saddest in our lives. No one outside "Hut Land" can ever realise the consolation and joy it has been to us during those awful days of War to be able, in some manner to make up to all the "Overseas" lads for the sufferings they have gone through and the deprivation of home-life and the comforts to which they were used in times of Peace.

So much has been said of the appreciation *by the boys* of the work done in this Club by the various helpers, that I wonder if the boys in any way realise how much *we* appreciated *them* and all they did for us during their visits to London? It was wonderful, their spirit of good cheer, their "bonne camaraderie" with each other and their own endeavour to make our Club all that it aimed to be.

A Club worker in London has a much better chance of seeing the true spirit of the boys than anywhere else. There they have to rub shoulders with men of every allied country,—for our Club was open to all. They truly did rub shoulders and formed the deepest friendships,—Canada with Australia,—America with Belgium,—and we, English, well, we just loved them all and shall never forget those happy days when we were all one big family.

As the Feasts came round, we felt kindly for the boys, knowing how their thoughts must naturally turn to their own homes and all that would be happening there; but one and all were determined not to let a shadow appear and it was more that edifying for us to see them. They worked with us all to decorate at Christmas and they worked no less hard at Easter, when it came their turn to find the Easter eggs we had so carefully hidden for

them. But, Feast or not, we were continually surrounded with that spirit of happiness with which the boys were infused, and no praise can be too high for the way in which they gave us a helping hand at all times.

When, a week ago, the last beds were being taken away and hardly a chair remained, I was bombarded by a Canadian, an American and an Australian, begging to be allowed to remain until the doors were finally barred and bolted. They were quite content to sleep on the floor and to feed in real picnic fashion whilst we cleared up the final remains of our beloved Club. To refuse them was impossible and, as I think of them now, it gives me one more proof of that wonderful friendship between our friends from Overseas and it seems to me a symbol of their firm resolve to stand by the "Old Mother Country" even when she had only bare boards and little food to offer them.

## **Appendix Two**

### **A TRIP TO SIBERIA.**

THE departure of Canadian troops to Siberia gave to the Directors in Canada an opportunity of doing what they would have wished to do Overseas had it been found possible. The Chaplains preparing to leave Camp Willows, Victoria, in Dec. 1918, found that they were to have with them a K. of C. Secretary who would look after the recreation and comforts of the troops. Gramophones furnished from Ottawa had already arrived and made such a decided hit that a number of other musical instruments were bought by the Secretary, who also laid in a stock of good things for distribution at Christmas time on the boat. The convoy left Victoria on Dec. 21st and arrived after a stormy voyage at Vladivostock on Jan. 12. Three weeks later the Secretary found that 70 per cent of the Canadian troops were to be located at Gournostia, about 12 miles from the City. He then endeavoured to locate a building for a K. of C. Club in Vladivostock; but this was found impossible. The only accommodation which could be secured was part of the barrack property at Gournostia which was released by the Military Authorities about March 1st. The Camp Engineers erected a stage and provided benches and tables to accommodate 500 men. The formal Hut opening took place on March 15th when Brig. Gen'l Brickford with his Staff and about 800 "other ranks" witnessed an excellent programme of 8 boxing bouts. The exercise of the "manly art" afterwards became a weekly event in camp life and the K. of C. evenings were looked forward to, not only by Canadians but also by British and American jack-tars who journeyed to the camp from the harbour for this purpose.

When the fine weather set in about the middle of April, outdoor sports were organized and the C. A. H. had the honour of presenting the prizes given on all these occasions. The spirit of our work was well observed

by the Secretary who, during the stay of the Army in Siberia, distributed a million cigarettes and a hundred thousand packages of gum. Besides the distribution thus made to the units, the Secretary helped out the work of the Chaplains in distributing to the Hospitals many comforts provided by the C. A. H. and the Canadian Red Cross.

On May 15th, the necessity of the Hut had ceased to exist and the one and only Secretary "on active service" returned to Vancouver and rendered an account of his careful stewardship. The excellent results thus obtained by one layman will give food for thought to many a Catholic Chaplain who had had to fulfil the duties of K. of C. Secretary in addition to his own. Consolation may be found in the reflection that is what *was* done was well done.

In termination of this brief account we are very proud to be able to add to it a word of friendly appreciation from a Senior Church of England Chaplain, who after long service overseas, was also with the troops in Siberia:

*"I very gladly add my testimony to the excellency of the work of the C. A. H. organization with the C. E. F. (Siberia). Owing to the most discouraging handicap of lack of proper transportation and accommodation, there was some delay in getting the work started; but once under way, it soon became a very prominent feature with the troops and a boon to all, irrespective of rank or creed. The Secretary and the two Chaplains most closely associated with him in the free distribution of the many good things among the hospitals and barracks, deserve the greatest praise for their untiring efforts, as, indeed, they have the sincerest thanks of all ranks."*

### **Appendix Three**

#### **COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE**

**W**HEN the Dominion Government granted a Charter to the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts, a head office under the direct supervision of the Secretary-Treasurer, was opened in Ottawa, from which the early activities, such as the drives for funds, preliminary organization and overseas work, were directed. This office remained the hub of the organization until the cessation of hostilities; when, with the return of the Canadian troops for demobilization following the Armistice, the main activities were transferred to Canada and the Board of Directors appointed Lieutenant-Colonel Clarence F. Smith, of Montreal, Comptroller and handed into his charge the administration of the C. A. H.

The Comptroller established his office in Montreal in the last days of 1918, and the Huts and Offices throughout the Dominion, to say nothing of the Returned Soldiers' Committees which were later put into operation, received all their supplies, instructions and funds from this source. Efficiency and economy were the Comptroller's main standards in the completion of his arrangements. Administrative charges were therefore at all times held to the lowest possible minimum and the personnel of all Huts and Offices kept as small as was consistent with practical service to the returned men.

It is not the intention to weary the reader with any detailed description of mere office routine. Suffice to say that the Comptroller's office was divided into Secretarial, Purchasing, Accounting and Service branches, covering all phases of the work and all closely co-ordinated to the common end.

While a considerable amount of discretionary authority was delegated to the various local Committee Chairmen and to the Secretaries, matters of policy and cases on which these officials felt that a ruling from headquarters was desirable, were referred to the Comptroller's office,

which at all times gave such matters prompt and careful consideration.

The compiling of records and the keeping of a close check on the activities through the country naturally involved considerable correspondence and the files of the Comptroller's office soon amassed a wealth of correspondence from almost every imaginable source, right across the country.

In the matter of supplies, in order that the Catholic Army Huts might always be in a position to take advantage of the best market conditions by buying in quantities, practically all goods were purchased through the Comptroller's office, with the exception of perishable articles which, of course, had to be procured locally.

So much for the general run of work in the Comptroller's Office; one branch of which, however, must be presented to the reader as being most distinctly out of the ordinary. The Service department of the Catholic Army Huts is worthy of special mention, inasmuch as its direct contact with ex-service men all over the Dominion and in many cases in the United Kingdom and the United States, constituted a record of service which was as varied in its many phases as it was welcome to the veterans for whose benefit it was operated.

To begin at home, so to speak, a huge amount of work was done right across the office counter, with returned men of practically all of the Allied Nations, regardless of colour, race or religion, in the adjustment of their post-discharge troubles. Questions of Pensions, War Service Gratuity, Post Discharge Pay, Working Pay, refunds of moneys paid for the passage of dependents home to Canada and so forth, became matters of daily routine to the C. A. H. Some thirty-five hundred cases were dealt with during the period of the office's active operation and on busy days during the demobilization period, the number of enquiries frequently ran high over the hundred mark.



Lieutenant-Colonel Clarence F. Smith, Montreal, Que. Comptroller K. of C.  
Catholic Army Huts, 1918-19-20-21-22.



Apart from this, over seven thousand five hundred documents were certified for returned men in the Comptroller's Office alone. In many instances, the cases of applicants for advice and help could be cleared up by direct personal interview over the counter; but very frequently, considerable correspondence was involved, necessitating the opening of a file for each case. Letters were exchanged on a generous scale between the Comptroller's Office and the authorities of the forces and the Government in Canada and in the United Kingdom. In the cases of men discharged from the Imperial Services matters of adjustment of pay, etc., took weeks and sometimes months in disposal. Each case had to be handled on its own merits, the proper departments communicated with, and the matter then followed up until a final ruling was given.

The closest co-operation was established and maintained with all the Montreal branches of the various Government Departments and cases were frequently handled direct through them. In addition to this, communications with the heads of Departments in Ottawa were invariably very promptly dealt with, as the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts soon became recognized as a regular source of correspondence in matters interesting to returned soldiers and sailors, both individually and collectively. In cases of claims of any kind by married men, the Canadian Patriotic Fund was always consulted in instances where the financial or other status of the wife or children might be affected. In short, it was always the policy of the C. A. H. to work in conjunction with kindred organizations, whether volunteer bodies or permanent institutions for the benefit of ex-service men.

Many applicants came to the Comptroller's Office whose cases could not be in any way advised on or adjusted by any definitely known routine and the individuality of those employed in the Service Branch of the C. A. H. was frequently called into play in getting results in such instances. Many cases presented themselves

the peculiar circumstances of which debarred the applicants from obtaining aid from other organizations. This applied more especially to men in need of financial assistance for their civilian re-establishment; or, in quite a number of cases, for the bare necessities of life. Other pages of this book are devoted to precisely this class of work at outside points and it is not intended to do more than briefly refer to it here. The following are typical of this class of work in Montreal.

A veteran from one of the Highland Regiments of the Imperial Army came out to Canada following his discharge from the service and shortly after landing became almost blind, due to an unfortunate accident. The man was, of course, not eligible for any compensation, as he was clear of the army at the time of the occurrence. He was unable to work, had no friends in the country and was obsessed with the one idea of getting back to his home in Scotland, where he would be well cared for by relatives. He came to the Comptroller's office one morning and stated his case. During the investigation which was immediately started, he was accommodated at one of the Montreal Huts and as soon as the facts of the case were established the C. A. H. made the necessary arrangements for his transportation back to Scotland by an early boat. Thus the veteran was enabled to return home.

A discharged man from British Columbia, well over middle age, was working in Montreal, took ill and was admitted to hospital under the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment. On his discharge as cured, he wished to go back to B. C.; but was without funds and not eligible for transportation at the Government's expense. The Catholic Army Huts paid his railway fare back to his home town.

In another case the doctors stated that a veteran's only chance for life was to go to California. The C. A. H. made a substantial cash advance to make this possible.

There were also a considerable number of cases in which moneys were advanced to returned men who wished to re-establish themselves in various businesses. It is pleasing to be able to state that most of these ventures turned out successfully.

Some of the most deserving cases handled were those of Canadian soldiers who arrived back, under repatriation arrangements, after having taken their discharge in England. In such cases the men had been unable to find employment in the Old Land and had asked to be sent back home. These men were invariably absolutely without funds and were accordingly either helped to reach their homes, or provided with the necessities of life until employment was found for them.

From outside points also there came requests for help in the matter of railway fares. An example of this was the case of an ex-service man in Port Arthur, Ont. He had just been discharged from hospital, was penniless and unable to work on account of his weakened state of health. The C. A. H. solved his problem by paying his fare to his home in Sherbrooke, Que.

From the facts cited, the reader will readily see that even the cases handled by direct interview were by no means always easy of disposal. There were hundreds of other cases, too, which came into the Comptroller's Office through the mails. Men who had maybe once visited the office and later located in distant parts of the Dominion would write in stating their difficulties and their various needs would be taken up with the authorities and the applicants kept fully advised until the adjustments were reached. The various Huts and Offices, although operating Service counters of their own, would from time to time be faced with problems on which they would need advice and these were referred to head office for further investigation and disposal.

Another distinct feature of the work of the Comptroller's Office was the making of cash advances to veterans. A considerable number of loans were made

directly through the Office and all large advances made at other points were referred to the Comptroller for approval. This, it may be readily seen, kept the head office busy with the soldier's financial problems. According to the records, one thousand six hundred and seventy-three loans totalling some ninety-five thousand dollars, were made between December 1919 and June 1921, by the Catholic Army Huts. It is very much to the credit of the office and of the men accommodated that only thirteen thousand seven hundred and eighteen dollars was unpaid at the latter date.

A drive was also made throughout the Councils of the Order in Canada, for clothing for destitute ex-service men. In Montreal alone over two hundred and sixty men were provided with various garments from the supply on hand or through purchases made for them.

Apart from loans proper, there were also a very large number of instances in which railway tickets were supplied to men with positions to go to out of town. Each case was individually investigated by telegraph or long-distance telephone and, without going into details of the work, some three hundred men were helped in this manner. These cases were not only dealt with by the Comptroller's office direct, but were handled in a similar manner throughout the country, being referred to Montreal for sanction where any considerable outlay was involved. Men were frequently sent considerable distances where the bona fides of the claims to good positions was established.

Throughout the trying days of unemployment in the period following the cessation of hostilities, the Catholic Army Huts endeavoured to co-operate in every way with the returned men in the solution of the great problem of finding a living. This was done by endeavouring to place them in positions, both directly and through the Information and Service Branch of the D. S. C. R. with which a very close liaison was kept up.

When employment was not to be had, the C. A. H. endeavoured where possible, to provide accommodation

for the men in the Huts and when these closed by paying their board and lodging for short periods. This kind of work was done all through the Dominion, particularly in the more populous centres where the situation was naturally most acute. In Montreal alone some six hundred men and sixty families were looked after in this latter way—a fair example of the extent of this particular class of work.

In cases where assistance of this kind was granted, the applicant was obliged during the time of his enjoyment of C. A. H. hospitality, to genuinely attempt to find work. It was never the policy of the Huts to encourage the men to simply look to charity for subsistence.

It was through the Comptroller's Office that the work among the permanent units of the Canadian Forces was first developed. The story of what was accomplished in this respect is told in another chapter.

The donations to various returned men's societies, referred to elsewhere in these pages, were dealt with through the Comptroller's office. Equipment of all kinds, whether for use by the C. A. H. or for disposal through other channels, was invariably bought through the Purchasing Department, for reasons already outlined.

It is not easy to set forth the accomplishments of the head office of any organization. Much that is done and that takes much time and labour in doing, must needs be passed over as merely a question of routine. It will be clearly seen from the foregoing, however, that the Office of the Comptroller of the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts played an active and important part in the work in Canada for the returned men and entered in a practical manner into every phase of what was accomplished.



### *Appendix Four*

#### OVERSEAS CHAPLAINS

RT. REV. JOSEPH MEDARD EMARD, D.D.  
*Bishop of Valleyfield*

BISHOP ORDINARY FOR ARMY AND NAVY

*Catholic Military Chaplains who served in the Great War  
1914-1918*

CAPTAIN REV. J. ARTS	CAPTAIN REV. J. A. DUCHARME
CAPTAIN REV. A. F. BEAUSOLEIL	CAPTAIN REV. A. J. DUMAS
CAPTAIN REV. H. L. BÉLIVEAU	CAPTAIN REV. C. A. FALLON, MILITARY CROSS
CAPTAIN REV. J. G. BOUILLOU	CAPTAIN REV. J. P. FALLON
CAPTAIN REV. J. L. BRADLEY	LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REV. J. A. FORTIER, MILITARY CROSS
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL VERY REV. MGR. A. E. BURKE	LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REV. F. L. FRENCH, D.S.O.
CAPTAIN REV. W. E. CANNON	CAPTAIN REV. J. J. GAUDET
CAPTAIN REV. W. P. CARLETON, CROIX DE GUERRE	CAPTAIN REV. G. GAUVREAU
MAJOR REV. ABBÉ PHILIPPE CASGRAIN, C.M.G.	CAPTAIN REV. M. GILLIS
MAJOR REV. C. E. CHARTIER	CAPTAIN REV. W. G. GOODROW
CAPTAIN REV. I. D. COMEAU	CAPTAIN REV. ED. GUAY
CAPTAIN REV. T. L. COONEY	CAPTAIN REV. G. A. HAMEL
CAPTAIN REV. W. T. CORCORAN	CAPTAIN REV. E. HAWKS
CAPTAIN REV. F. R. COSTELLO	CAPTAIN REV. A. J. HETHERINGTON
CAPTAIN REV. P. COSTELLO	MAJOR REV. W. H. HINGSTON
CAPTAIN REV. G. J. COTÉ	CAPTAIN REV. T. P. HUSSEY
CAPTAIN REV. A. B. COTÉ	LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REV. S. JOLICOEUR
CAPTAIN REV. T. P. CURRAN	CAPTAIN REV. W. J. KELLY
CAPTAIN REV. I. J. E. DANIEL	CAPTAIN REV. W. T. KELLY
CAPTAIN REV. M. DE LA TAILLE	CAPTAIN REV. P. J. KELLY
CAPTAIN REV. J. J. DESJARDINS	CAPTAIN REV. J. P. KILLORAN
MAJOR REV. J. N. A. DESJARDINS	MAJOR REV. J. KNOX, O.B.E.
MAJOR REV. ED. G. DOE	CAPTAIN REV. A. J. LABONTÉ
CAPTAIN REV. B. S. J. DOYLE	CAPTAIN REV. O. LACOUTURE
CAPTAIN REV. C. V. DOYON	

*Canadian Knights of Columbus*

---

OVERSEAS CHAPLAINS—*Continued*

- CAPTAIN REV. A. A. LAMARRE  
CAPTAIN REV. E. LAWS  
CAPTAIN REV. H. E. LETANG  
CAPTAIN REV. J. O. LIZOTTE  
CAPTAIN REV. F. M. LOCKARY  
CAPTAIN REV. L. P. LOWRY  
CAPTAIN REV. A. B. MACDONALD  
CAPTAIN REV. E. J. MACDONALD,  
MILITARY CROSS  
CAPTAIN REV. R. A. MACDONNELL,  
MILITARY CROSS  
CAPTAIN REV. R. C. MACGILLIVARY,  
MILITARY CROSS  
MAJOR REV. D. MCPHERSON  
CAPTAIN REV. H. J. McCALLION  
MAJOR REV. T. M. McCARTHY,  
MILITARY CROSS  
CAPTAIN REV. P. A. McDONALD  
CAPTAIN REV. R. McDONALD  
CAPT. REV. P. MCQUINLAN  
MAJOR REV. A. MADDEN, D.S.O., M.C.  
CAPTAIN REV. L. MALTAIS  
CAPTAIN REV. J. V. MEAGHER  
CAPTAIN REV. R. J. MOORE  
CAPTAIN REV. B. J. MURDOCK  
CAPTAIN REV. P. E. MURPHY  
CAPTAIN REV. W. L. MURRAY,  
MILITARY CROSS AND BAR  
CAPTAIN REV. J. F. NICHOLSON,  
MILITARY CROSS  
CAPTAIN REV. M. T. O'BRIEN  
CAPTAIN REV. C. D. O'GORMAN  
CAPTAIN REV. R. CROCHETIÈRE, KILLED IN ACTION THE 2ND OF APRIL, 1918.
- MAJOR REV. DR. J. J. O'GORMAN,  
O.B.E.  
CAPTAIN REV. J. R. O'GORMAN  
CAPTAIN REV. M. J. O'GORMAN  
CAPTAIN REV. P. F. O'HARE  
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REV. P. M.  
O'LEARY  
CAPTAIN REV. J. M. E. OLIVIER  
CAPTAIN REV. J. J. O'REILLY  
CAPTAIN REV. T. O'SULLIVAN  
CAPTAIN REV. J. PAQUIN  
CAPTAIN REV. F. M. PHANEUF  
CAPTAIN REV. M. J. PICKETT  
CAPTAIN REV. J. PIROT  
CAPTAIN REV. ED. H. PLANET  
CAPTAIN REV. L. J. ROCHE  
CAPTAIN REV. J. ROONÉY  
CAPTAIN REV. J. J. SAMMON  
CAPTAIN REV. L. SIGOUIN  
CAPTAIN REV. M. D. STALEY  
CAPTAIN REV. A. STANTON  
MAJOR REV. D. J. SUMMERS  
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL VERY REVER-  
END CANON L. A. SYLVESTRE  
CAPTAIN REV. W. H. THORNTON  
MAJOR REV. M. N. TOMPKINS, MILI-  
TARY CROSS  
CAPTAIN REV. F. P. WHITE  
CAPTAIN REV. A. B. W. WOOD  
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL W. T. WORK-  
MAN, MILITARY CROSS

*Appendix Five*

---

STATEMENT  
*of*  
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS  
*from*  
NOVEMBER 7TH, 1917  
TO MARCH 31ST, 1922



*To Whom It May Concern:*

The correspondence and audited statement contained in this pamphlet show clearly the wishes of the governing body of this Association, that a public statement be issued of receipts and expenditures from the inception of the Corporation to date, and the ruling by the State Department of the Dominion Government in connection therewith, both of which are self-explanatory.

The record of the activities of the Association, whether overseas or in Canada, is an open book and the best reference to be offered is the praise that has continually been received from the men of the Canadian Forces and their dependents.

The work is rapidly drawing to a close. The hospital and loan departments which have given relief to returned men and their dependents are now in the winding-up stage. It is expected the balance of cash on hand, as shown on statement as at March 31st, 1922, will be sufficient to properly complete the present activities.

The generosity and patriotism of the Canadian public made the work possible. For the patronage extended the Association feels most grateful. It has been the endeavour of the governing body (who have worked without any remuneration) to faithfully administer the funds entrusted to them as economically as possible.

*Respectfully submitted,*

CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS

J. L. MURRAY,  
*Secretary-Treasurer.*

*Canadian Knights of Columbus*

---

APRIL 17th, 1922.

THOS. MULVEY, Esq., K.C.,  
Under-Secretary of State,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Sir:—

*The funds subscribed by the people of Canada to Catholic Army Huts, in trust for members of the Overseas Forces of Canada, and their dependents, will shortly be exhausted. The Directors now desire to publish an account of their stewardship.*

*Were it not for the very considerable expense involved, the Directors would be pleased to give their statement the widest possible publicity. Unfortunately, however, the item of expense is one that cannot be ignored.*

As will appear from the records in your Department Catholic Army Huts has complied strictly with the provisions of the War Charities Act in the matter of filing semi-annual statements, in detail, of the various items of its receipts and expenditures at home and abroad, and these statements have been duly audited and certified as correct by Mr. W. A. Tolley, F. S. A. A. (Eng.) Chartered Accountant, Ottawa, by Messrs. P. C. Shannon & Sons, Chartered Accountants, Montreal and by Messrs Leicester & Co., Chartered Accountants, London, England. The Directors are pleased to know that these statements have been subjected to further examination by the Officers of your Department and that no exception has been taken to any item appearing therein.

*The official returns on file in your Department are available to any person desiring information as to details, hence, we assume, that a summary of the information therein contained will suffice.*

*The Directors would greatly appreciate a statement from you whether the expense of publishing this report would be objected to by your department.*

*Yours sincerely,*

CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS

J. L. MURRAY,  
*Secretary-Treasurer.*

CANADA

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

OTTAWA, APRIL 18, 1922.

Sir,

*I beg to acknowledge receipt of yours of the 17th instant enclosing statement compiled from the various statements filed with this Department pursuant to the provisions of the War Charities Act.*

*The provisions of the War Charities Act in so far as the filing of returns is concerned have been fully complied with by the Catholic Army Huts. The statements of the Catholic Army Huts regularly audited by chartered accountants have been subjected to further scrutiny by the officers of this Department and no exception is taken to any item therein.*

*The statements filed with this Department being open to public inspection, I would not be disposed to favour the expenditure of any considerable sum in their publication. The Department would, however, raise no objection to the expenditure of a moderate sum for such purpose.*

*I have the honour to be,  
Sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

(Sgd) THOMAS MULVEY,

*Under Secretary of State.*

J. L. MURRAY, ESQUIRE,  
*Secretary-Treasurer, Catholic Army Huts,*  
OTTAWA.

## *Canadian Knights of Columbus*

## CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS

### **Condensed Statement of Receipts and Disbursements**

**From November 7th, 1917 to March 31st, 1922**

## RECEIPTS

Provincial and Municipal grants and public subscriptions . . .	\$1,250,352.09
Bank Interest . . . . .	31,387.70
Interest on Investments . . . . .	10,305.35

**\$1,292,045.14**

## AUDITOR'S REPORT

The foregoing statement of receipts and disbursements is in accordance with the books at the Head Office, Ottawa, and I certify the same to be correct.

Audited statements verifying the receipts and disbursements of the Comptroller in Montreal, and the various branches have been submitted to the Head Office and included in the above statement.

Ottawa, Ont., April 11th, 1922. (Sgd.) W. A. TOLLEY, F.S.A.A. (Eng.)  
Chartered Accountant

## Catholic Army Huts Activities

---

### CATHOLIC ARMY HUTS

#### Condensed Statement of Receipts and Disbursements From November 7th, 1917 to March 31st, 1922

#### DISBURSEMENTS

Administration expenses viz:-

Salaries Clerical Staff.....	\$ 57,713.84
Rent.....	7,708.07
Office expenses and equipment.....	23,072.19
Travelling Expenses.....	3,795.63
Other Expenses, Advertising, Publicity, Taxes, Insurance, Licenses, etc.....	28,869.06 \$ 121,158.79

CAMPAIGN EXPENSES (Advertising, etc. soliciting funds).....  
Amount devoted to Charity: viz.—

Monetary assistance Overseas.....	\$ 229,278.11
Less amount returned and interest theron.....	17,120.95

Furniture and equipment for Huts and Cafes and offices.....	68,984.30
Less amount realized from sale of equipment.....	20,464.98

Operating expenses of Huts in Canada: viz.

Alterations and repairs of Huts:—	62,028.49
Cafe and Canteen provisions and supplies.....	325,803.78
Rents of Huts.....	56,732.01
Salaries—Provincial Commissioners, Hut Secretaries and Assistants.....	68,635.85
Hut and Cafe wages and expenses.....	112,101.02
Travelling expenses.....	8,195.45
Office Stationery and Supplies.....	10,603.36
Telegrams, telephone and postage.....	4,540.36
Entertainment and library supplies and ex- penses.....	13,448.17
Taxes and Insurance.....	4,901.42
Light, heat and water.....	29,184.15
Lodging expense.....	22,019.26
Huts general expenses.....	23,898.19

Donations, comforts and assistance to Returned Sol-  
diers and dependents.....

290,046.06

1,032,137.57 719,621.80

312,515.77

Less receipts from Huts and Cafes in Canada.....

Loans to Returned Soldiers..... 90,598.41

Less repayments..... 77,245.83 13,352.58

Material supplied overseas and in Canada, such as  
tents, equipment, cigarettes, gum, soldiers'  
comforts, books, writing material,etc.....

48,051.71

\$1,041,702.57

Total amount devoted to charity.....

1,232,994.50

Total Disbursements.....

59,050.64

Balance carried forward, viz:—

Cash on hand and in Banks.....

\$1,292,045.14

## *Canadian Knights of Columbus*

---

### MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

---

#### President

VERY REV. CANON LT.-COL. L. A. SYLVESTRE  
Montreal, Que.

#### Vice-President

MR. GEO. HANRAHAN  
Winsdor, Ont.

#### Directors

Mr. William Brennan.....	Kamloops, B.C.
Rev. Capt. I. J. E. Daniel.....	Edmonton, Alta.
Dr. E. J. Madden.....	Calgary, Alta.
Rev. Major Thos. McCarthy, M.C.....	Stratford, Ont
Mr. J. H. O'Connor.....	Winnipeg, Man.
Rev. Lt.-Col. F. L. French, D.S.O.....	Renfrew, Ont.
Mr. L. G. Jourdain.....	Three Rivers, Que.
Rev. Capt. J. R. MacDonald.....	Antigonish, N.S.
Dr. W. P. Broderick.....	St. John, N.B.
Mr. J. L. Murray, Secretary-Treasurer.....	Renfrew, Ont.

#### Past Directors

Rev. Major John J. O'Gorman, O.B.E.....	Ottawa, Ont.
Rev. Major Abbé Philippe Casgrain, C.M.G.....	Quebec, Que.
Rev. Major John Knox, O. B. E.....	Guelph, Ont.
Rev. Capt. J. J. O'Reilly.....	Deseronto, Ont.
Rev. Lt.-Col. J. A. Fortier, M.C.....	Halifax, N.S.
Hon. Geo. H. Boivin, K.C., M.P.....	Granby, Que.
Mr. J. L. Murray.....	Renfrew, Ont.
Mr. J. D. O'Connell.....	Victoria, B. C.
Mr. L. V. O'Connor.....	Lindsay, Ont.
Mr. J. J. Leddy.....	Saskatoon, Sask.
Mr. L. A. Giroux.....	Edmonton, Alta.
Mr. J. P. Foley, K.C. ....	Winnipeg, Man.

Lt.-Col. Clarence F. Smith, Comptroller,  
Montreal, Que.



Lt.-Col. Very Rev. Canon L. A. Sylvestre, head of the R. C. Chaplains in Canada,  
Director and President K. of C. Catholic Army Huts, 1917-18-19-20-21-22.



## FINALE

WE have confined the foregoing pages to a mere setting down of facts, without any attempt to enlarge thereon. We are convinced that even a cursory perusal of this volume must convince the most sceptical that the Knights of Columbus Catholic Army Huts made an honest endeavour to live up to the trust reposed in them by the Canadian people, Catholic and Protestant.

The work of the C.A.H. entailed no little labour and devotion to duty. It found its reward in the service it was able to render the troops. The nature of this service can be gleaned from what we have already written. That it was appreciated by those most competent to judge is evident from the following letters addressed to the head of the Canadian Catholic Chaplain Service by General Currie, Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Forces and now Principal of McGill University, Montreal, and Lieut.-General Sir R. E. W. Turner, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.:—

*"Before the Canadian Corps finally breaks up, I would like to place on record my appreciation of the good work accomplished for the Troops of the Corps by the Catholic Army Huts, and in doing so I know I am voicing the sentiments of all of Canada's soldiers overseas.*

*"I am, of course, more familiar with the accommodation supplied, and the comforts obtained, in the Chapel tents in the field, but from many sources I have received testimonials of the great good done in the Huts at the Base Camps and at the Camps in England.*

*"I know that while the only religious service conducted in these Huts and tents was the Roman Catholic Service, I also know that at all other times men of every denomination were accorded the same cordial welcome, and that all received the same treatment as regards the free drinks, free biscuits, free smokes, free matches, and free stationery there dispensed.*

*"To me, dear Colonel, this co-operation, this each for all and all for each spirit, so characteristic of the Canadian Corps, is a wonderful and inspiring thing, and justifies*

## Canadian Knights of Columbus

---

*one in hoping that our national life shall be characterized by a spirit of tolerance, mutual sympathy and support, unselfishness, and devotion to duty.*

*"I am sure all those who contributed so generously to your cause will be happy in knowing how much you were able to accomplish, and with what gratitude your efforts were acknowledged.*

*"Ever yours faithfully,*

*"(Sgd.) A. W. CURRIE"*

The Directors of the C.A.H. in England received the following official recognition of their work from Lieut-General Sir R. E. W. Turner, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.:—

*"As I understand you are issuing a final report on the work of the Catholic Army Huts in England, I wish to place on record my high appreciation of the magnificent work you have done in this connection.*

*"The three clubs in London and those in Bramshott, Wiley, Seaford, Ripon, Rhyl, Epsom, Bexhill and Cooden have been a God-send to our men, and I feel sure that I am voicing the opinion of the people of Canada when I thank you on their behalf for providing their boys with such facilities during their absence from their own homes.*

*"As you know, I have at different times visited your clubs and have been much struck with the liberal way you have furnished them. The men I know have appreciated the writing paper, cigarettes and other comforts which have been provided.*

*"I also want to thank you for the assistance you have given us on the transports by providing free cigarettes, games, chewing gum and writing paper.*

*"I can assure you that your huts have been the means of gladdening the hearts of thousands of Canadians.*

*"Yours sincerely,*

*"(Sgd.) R. E. W. TURNER."*

Additional testimony might be cited from many sources; for instance, Mr. J. J. Leddy, Supreme Director of the Knights of Columbus and First Vice-President of the Canadian Board of Directors of the Catholic Army Huts Association was decorated by the French

Government and made an officer of public instruction, and received the personal thanks of His Eminence Cardinal Mercier.

But the most outstanding mark of favour was received from the hands of Our Holy Father, Pius XI. To mark the Holy See's appreciation of the work of the C.A.H., His Holiness was graciously pleased to create Mr. J. L. Murray and Mr. George H. Boivin, K.C., M.P., Knight Commanders of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. Messrs. Murray and Boivin were singled out by the Holy Father for their zeal in the promotion of the work of the C.A.H. and the honour conferred upon them is shared by every other Director.

It was truly a big night for Columbianism in Canada when on Thursday, October 12th, 1922, His Excellency Mgr. Peter di Maria, Apostolic Delegate to Canada, invested those gentlemen with the insignia of membership in this famous Order. Grouped round His Excellency in the Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, on that occasion were many of the most prominent clerical and lay citizens of the Dominion, Protestant and Catholic. The following extract from the report of the proceedings is taken from the Ottawa Citizen of October 13th:

*The ceremony of the investiture of the insignia was most impressive. It occurred in the ball room of the Chateau Laurier. Escorted by a guard of honour of fourth degree Knights, in command of Major J. Gillies and representatives of Dollard assembly, Montreal, and Cartier assembly of Ottawa, His Excellency Mgr. Peter di Maria, the papal delegate, made his way through ranks of guests to the dais in the centre of this beautiful room. Seated on either side of His Excellency were His Grace Archbishop Émard of the Ottawa archdiocese, and His Lordship Bishop P. T. Ryan, of Pembroke. The others who occupied positions on the dais were Knight Commander Mr. P. T. Légaré, Mr. Justice Latchford and Messrs. Boivin and Murray.*

*After receiving felicitations on behalf of the Knights from Mr. Justice Latchford, His Excellency addressed the gathering in general, and those about to be honoured in particular.*

The Papal Delegate spoke as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: Again I have the pleasure of finding myself among the dear Knights of Columbus. Your sentiments of sincere Catholicity and unfaltering loyalty to the See of Peter are now so well known as to form the pith and the core of your fraternal Order. Therefore, I thank God for having given to His Church, in these days of an even increasing infidelity among the old Christian nations, such a splendid body of Catholic manhood like the Knights of Columbus. Although your sentiments as well as your activities are already well known and appreciated by the Supreme Authority of the Church, nevertheless I, as the humble representative of the Holy See in this great Dominion, will surely convey your message of renewed fealty to His Holiness and I need not repeat to you how welcome it will be in Rome.

To-night I came here to give you a token of this Pontifical appreciation of your work for Church and country.

The awful scourge which God Almighty allowed to visit mankind in the last decade brought also many problems to the attention of those who were concerned with the religious as well as with the material welfare of the soldiers.

One of these religious problems was the spiritual and the social assistance for the Catholic soldiers overseas. It is true that Catholic Chaplains were, more or less, provided by all the fighting nations for their respective Catholic men; but these men could not be kept on the firing line all the time. Rest and relaxation had to be provided in some way, just as much as food. And while the camp or the barracks would give some rest to the exhausted soldier, these places could scarcely give him any sort of wholesome amusement. Consequently, as soon as the poor fellow had sufficiently recuperated his

strength and wits, he would surely look around for some sort of distraction and, perhaps, of dissipation.

We all know human nature enough; even in the midst of the most gruesome circumstances of life, if prolonged, men will accustom themselves to the daily sight of death and easily forget the immediate danger. And this is exactly what happened during the war. Everybody knows the fearful ravages wrought by all kind of vice and dissipation among the soldiers at the front, even under the shadow of death.

Now, where were the good Samaritans, who would lend a helping hand to our unfortunate boys, exposed as they were, not only to the poisonous gas and to the deadly shrapnels, but also, and even more so, to the venom of those who infested the places frequented by the soldier while looking for some rest or vacation. Gentlemen: Let us thank God: the good Samaritans have not been wanting. They arrived sufficiently in time to prevent many moral and spiritual disasters to our boys and to take good care of them, by the two-fold purpose of providing Chapels and religious facilities for Catholic soldiers, and huts and recreational facilities for all soldiers irrespective of belief.

This work of mercy at the front has been done by the Canadian Catholic Army Huts Association which I, as the Apostolic Delegate to this beloved country, am happy and proud to hail and praise here to-night as the good Samaritan to our boys in England and in France.

Gentlemen, I need not recount to you in detail the many activities of this Association, as you all, my dear Knights of Columbus, have been and are still the powerful Association which stood behind those valiant Chaplains who conducted The Huts on the soil of Europe and are continuing the same good work on the Canadian soil from coast to coast,

Without the contribution of over one million dollars, which you and the Canadian people gave to the Association, the great work of Christian charity and moral protection could not have been accomplished. Moreover, no concerted action can be organized and no organization can be successful without leaders. And the Catholic Army Huts Association would not have come into existence, nor could it have attained any success without the leadership of a few men who proved to be true Knights of Catholic inspiration and untiring zeal.

These leaders are here among us to-night and I feel much pleasure in greeting them publicly and officially: they are the Rev. John J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., Pastor of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in Ottawa, Mr. George H. Boivin, Member of Parliament, Mr. J. L. Murray of Renfrew, Ontario, Mr. John P. Dunne of Prescott, Mr. W. T. Kernahan of Toronto and Mr. Clarence F. Smith, Montreal, Que. All these gentlemen have specially merited of the Army Huts Association, but I do not want to offend their modesty in analysing the individual accomplishments in the great work they have performed with the co-operation and with the good will of all their Brother Knights and of the Canadian Catholics at large.

It is however becoming and fit, I think, that, in congratulating all those who deserve credit for this work, I make a special mention of honour of dear Father O'Gorman, who was the first to devote himself to the Army Huts, while in Canada recuperating from his wounds. It was Fr. O'Gorman who came to my predecessor, the late lamented Mgr. Stagni, and obtained a warm letter of approval for his plans. The wheel was then set in motion, the endorsement of the Apostolic Delegation brought quick response from the Catholic Hierarchy and from your Order. Two of your leaders have so heartily and so stren-

uously co-operated with Fr. O'Gorman as to deserve a special acknowledgment of the Papal gratification for their indefatigable work. These two gentlemen are Mr. Boivin and Mr. Murray, and it affords me much pleasure indeed as Delegate to His Holiness Pope Piux XI to invest to-night these two excellent Catholic gentlemen with the insignia of Commanders of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. To-night, therefore, by the investiture of its two original Knights of Columbus Directors, as Commanders of St. Gregory the Great, the whole Catholic Army Hut Association receives a visible and permanent token of the approval of the Holy Father for the good work done.

To the new Commanders of St. Gregory the Great and to the whole Catholic Army Hut Association, consequently, my warm congratulations and my best wishes for a long and happy life.

Gentlemen, before closing let me also pay my tribute of esteem and admiration to all those generous, heroic Chaplains of sterling priestly spirit, who assisted our soldiers, spiritually and materially, at the front or in the Huts.

My esteem and admiration extend also to all those who have supported this admirable Association, thus serving God and Country.

Gentlemen, to-day is Columbus Day: may you all and always bear in your hearts the vivid faith of Christopher Columbus and in your spirit the indomitable courage of the immortal Discoverer of America.

The Catholic Army Huts Association is an illustration of the success which follows from the united action of Bishops, priests and laity. A union of Bishops, priests and laity is essential in any Catholic work. You have now a proof of what can be done by unity. Under the guidance of the Bishops, and with the assistance of the priests you will be always successful

in all your undertaking for Holy Mother Church and your native land.

After the Papal Delegate's address Very Rev. Canon L. A. Sylvestre read the papal edicts and as His Excellency affixed the official medal, with its ribbon of red silk and yellow border, upon these two Knights, the audience shattered the silence with its plaudits.

In those well-known rich sonorous tones, which many in Ottawa have heard carry to the far corners of the House of Commons, Mr. Boivin, speaking in French, expressed his gratitude and appreciation of the honour just conferred, and accepting it in its lofty significance, regarding it not so much in recognition of individual services rendered to a great cause but in the spirit of tribute to the response made to a clear call by the Knights of Columbus and people of Canada.

Mr. Murray replied as follows:—

May I ask that Your Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, will accept my most humble felicitations; my assurance of devotion to His Holiness, the head of the universal church; the grateful thanks of a full heart for the signal honour that has been conferred, my appreciation of the fact that the decoration is given not in recognition of the particular effort of an individual, but rather as a mark of commendation for the support and co-operation of the Knights of Columbus in Canada, in the promotion of welfare work in time of war, and finally as an acknowledgment of the magnificent response given by the people of this country, when the clarion call went forth asking for monetary assistance to enable the activities of the Catholic Army Huts to be successfully conducted. In that spirit, Your Excellency, I must respectfully acknowledge, and accept the decoration with which it has been my privilege to be honoured.

Like my friend, and fraternal Brother, Mr. Boivin, I receive the investiture of Knight Com-



Joseph Lawrence Murray, Renfrew, Ont., one of the original incorporators, Director and Member Executive Board K. of C. Catholic Army Huts, 1917-18-19, Secretary-Treasurer, 1917-18-19-20-21-22. Created Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, 25th day of April, 1922, by His Holiness Pope Pius XI.



mander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great in the name of the Knights of Columbus of Canada, and on their behalf I also ask that Your Excellency will convey to the Holy Father an expression of fealty and devotion from the membership of this country; the assurance our acceptance of a common standard and religious guide, and of our continued promotion of the principles of charity, chivalry and patriotism. Again thanks, Your Excellency, and my most respectful greetings.

The assemblage then adjourned to the main dining room for the banquet. This stately large room was packed with guests and friends. All parts of the country were thoroughly represented. State officials and church dignitaries, clergy and laity, vied with each other in eulogizing the distinguished guests. The head table guests included not only such eminent parliamentarians as the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, Senator M. J. O'Brien, the Hon. George P. Graham, and Hon. T. A. Low, but officials in other spheres of state service, such as Mr. Justice Latchford and Mr. Justice Mulligan. His Excellency the Papal Delegate, His Grace Archbishop Emard, His Lordship Bishop Ryan, Rev. Dr. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E., Very Rev. Canon L. A. Sylvestre, and many representatives of the clergy were seated near the guests of the evening. Mayor Plant officially represented the city of Ottawa, and was among those seated at the head table, where also was present Mr. P. T. Légaré, of Quebec City, who is also a Knight Commander of St. Gregory the Great.

Mr. Justice Latchford presided, and after reading several telegrams of regret from those unable to be present, he called for the toast to the King, and then the toast to the Pope, both of which were honoured, the former by singing of the National Anthem and the latter in silence.

In speaking to the latter toast, His Grace Archbishop Emard stressed the idea of unity among the Roman Catholic groups, instancing what had been accomplished

by unity in the results of the campaign for the Catholic Army Huts. He hoped now that the war activities had ceased the society would attain still greater achievements in peace.

His Lordship Bishop Ryan gave some intimate glimpses of the personality of Renfrew's honoured son, descended from a father who possessed the same sterling qualities, and His Lordship paid tribute to those high qualities present in the son.

In proposing the toast to "Our Guests" Mr. Justice Latchford referred in jocular vein to his own political vicissitudes in South Renfrew. Then in serious thought he thanked the assistance given to the overseas work of the Knights of Columbus by our separated brethren.

Both honoured guests received ovations on rising to speak.

Mr. Murray expressed himself as follows:—

Mr. Toastmaster, there are occasions in the life of every man when it is exceedingly difficult for him to find words that are expressive of the sentiment with which he is animated, and when it is even more difficult still to give voice to his sentiment in the manner deserved. For me, that occasion has arrived. One hardly knows where to begin, or how to conclude, there being so much that I would like to say in appreciation of the occasion. May I, at the outset, thank you, Mr. Toastmaster, for your more than kind personal words, and as I look forth upon this large and representative audience, graced as it is by dignitaries of State and Church, and attended by so many personal friends, it is indeed incumbent upon me to convey to those responsible for the magnificence of the beautiful setting, and all else, in connection with the ceremonies of the investiture—to convey to them, the most appreciative thanks. Thanks, and many times thanks, from one who will truly long retain vivid recollection of this wonderful event.

And, if I may be permitted a personal reference, let me add that to these words of appreciation, should be coupled those of my devoted wife, because in the great honour which you give to me it is eminently apropos that she should share. No one knows better than myself the inspiration and the encouragement so enthusiastically tendered during the days of the organization and development of the Army Huts. No one knows better than myself how her optimism spurred on the final campaign to glorious success. Men, I sometimes wonder if we fully realize how much is due the saintly mothers, the loving sisters, the devoted wives, and the daughters of this fair land. Theirs is often the part to labour unseen, unheralded and unsung. But amid the sunshine and the shadow, and the laughter and the tears, they furnish the faith, and the inspiration —our Canadian women—God bless them.

Several times, since the commencement of the ceremonies this evening, there passed before me in brief but vivid mental reverie, a panoramic picturization of the main events leading up to the culmination of a work that was as interesting as it was effective. When the first call for monetary help was issued by the Ontario provincial executive of the Knights of Columbus, that call was in answer to an appeal which reached us from the overseas chaplains. The appeal was one worthy of its direct author and bearer, Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman. He spoke from experience, and with positive knowledge of overseas conditions. He had been there not only in the training camps of England, not only in the hospitals, and casualty clearing stations, but right in the thick of the fray, where in the discharge of his duties he was struck by German shrapnel, and severely wounded. Father O'Gorman has suffered the real physical pains of war, in its hellish atrocity. So when he said "You must arouse public

sentiment to the extreme need of giving help to the Chaplains," it was palpably evident that there could be no delay, no failure, no half-way measure, on our part, if a true sense of appreciation of a deserving cause was really cherished by us. And, Sir, though it may now seem ancient history, and to some pacific element unnecessary repetition, yet I deem the occasion pertinent to reiterate the positive fact that up to the time of that first appeal the Catholic Chaplains in the Canadian Army were dependent on the kindness of others to secure a place to celebrate the sacrifice of the mass, to hear confessions, to give holy communion, and to minister generally to the spiritual needs of the Canadian Catholic soldiers. Each chaplain, out of his own pay, personally supplied his own wants for religious equipment, and for prayer books, rosaries, and crucifixes, for distribution among the thousands of Catholic soldiers in our Canadian corps. Talk about labouring under difficulty; talk about the spirit of sacrifice. Is it any wonder that I voice a word of praise and admiration, as I view the record of those brave, noble, and big-hearted Canadian priests, whose achievements are truly one of the brightest pages in the history of the world war.

The Knights of Columbus of Ontario immediately made a per capita levy on their membership, which was followed by a general appeal to the Catholic people of the province. This was followed by appeals to, and contributions from, other jurisdictions throughout Canada, culminating in the final Dominion-wide campaign, which met with such wonderful success. The chaplain service, overseas and at home, had in the meantime, received recognition, and its organization was splendid. The possible work was enormous, but to ensure its maintenance, and further expansion, more money was needed, not hundreds of dollars, nor thousands of dollars, but hundreds

of thousands of dollars. Remember, that up to that time, the Knights of Columbus had received no official standing, as a war and patriotic agency; in fact, there was then no national executive of the Knights of Columbus in the country. The difficulty, however, was bridged by co-operating with the chaplain service, and in conjunction with them we applied to, and received from the Canadian government, letters patent incorporating the Catholic Army Huts, a body corporate and politic, with rights and powers to erect, equip and conduct army huts which should serve the two-fold purpose of chapels for Catholic soldiers and recreation huts for all soldiers, irrespective of creed. The original directors of the corporation were the reverend chaplain, to whom I have already referred, Major Rev. J. J. O'Gorman, and my friend and associate George Henri Boivin, K.C., M.P., then State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus for Quebec, and to-day the Canadian representative on the Supreme Board of Directors of the Order. These two gentlemen, and myself, formed the first board of directors. National cohesion, and national co-operation, were necessary. These made success possible, and I here publicly pay deserved tribute to my fellow guest, my friend, George Boivin, for the part he took. I admire his capability, his scholarly manner, his eloquence, his patriotism, his broad Canadian vision, and his desire for the up-building, in this country, of a united people. And, I would like to think that the bond of unity that was cemented in the arch of the army huts will be one of permanency and durability, and that the people, particularly of Ontario and Quebec, will together labour for the solidification of this country, this Canada of ours, and for its maintenance as the brightest jewel in the shining cluster of the greatest galaxy of nations the world has ever known.

When the united Dominion-wide campaign for funds was launched it received a most wonderful response. That success was measured, not only by the tangible results received, but by the magnificent spirit of endorsement given from Prince Edward Island to Victoria, Governments, municipalities, cities, towns, rural communities, men prominent in the church, in the political and business world, citizens of all classes, and persons of all religious beliefs, contributed to the success of the undertaking. It would seem difficult, almost impossible, to select those persons deserving of special mention, but it is with pride and pleasure that I name at least one. Why? because his was the first reply of endorsement, and promise of support, that reached me. Because his endorsement meant a great deal; because his letter was one of true encouragement, and because his commendation assured me of success. Why? Because by public letter, to his people, he urged support, yes, and came on the public platform with me, and appealed for help. He is here to-night, and I pay tribute to him—Right Reverend Patrick Thomas Ryan, the beloved Bishop of Pembroke diocese, and a Canadian citizen of sterling worth. The Archbishops and Bishops of Canada, generally, approved of our proposal, and the endorsement given by these prelates throughout the length and breadth of the country was of great help during the campaign.

As to the actual work of the Knights of Columbus Army Huts overseas, under the management of the chaplain directors, or the work here in Canada, under the control of Lt. Colonel Clarence F. Smith, who gave of his time, and his energy, and his splendid executive ability, without cost to this organization, no words of mine are necessary in eulogy. The record is an open book. It stands before the world, not a page sullied, not a line tarnished. Whether from General Currie, or from the humblest member

of the Canadian Corps, only the very kindest messages of praise, and thanks, were received. These have been preserved, and will go into the official archives of the Dominion of Canada, so that our children, and their children, when they read history, will find the evidence that set the seal of nation-wide success on Catholic war relief work. And, Sir, as you and I have given, and do give testimony of our admiration of the intensity of patriotic fervour evidence by our fellow-citizens, of varied religious beliefs, so we ask recognition, by them, of the Catholic manifestation of the sublime power of patriotism. Our huts, our recreation centres, our comforts, our money grants, and all else that we had, were open to all men in khaki, irrespective of creed. Our signboard read "All Soldiers Welcome," and in that spirit of true Canadianism the endeavour was to be of service to the soldiers generally of our country. That esprit de corps could be fostered throughout the confines of the Dominion of Canada is the wish with which I conclude these words of thanks and appreciation. As the army was one in unity, one in effort, and one in loyalty; as the answer was given to that clarion call reaching us from our soldier boys across the trackless ocean, so there is a call to-day equally full of meaning, equally potential in its positive necessity, and equally tempered with the sweetness of confident response, the call that demands the energizing of our ambition, and the setting of ourselves consistently to the task of the development in this great country of a people who will be one in their Canadianism, a people who will be justly proud of their freedom, proud of their civilization, aye, and proud of their Christianity—a people who will be mutually respectful of one another's rights, liberties and beliefs, a people who will be as intent about their individual patriotism as they are of the national prosperity, in a word, a people, who will ever have

as their motto of service those golden, glorious words:—  
“FOR GOD AND COUNTRY.”

Mr. Boivin first spoke in English and then in French. Like that of his colleague, his speech was an eloquent plea for increased unity and better understanding among all races and creeds. He drew applause when he declared that “the first prayer beads and the first literature in French distributed to the Twenty-Second Battalion and other French-Canadian units were paid for by their English-speaking brethren of the K. of C. of Ontario.” In thanking all those who had contributed to the campaign, he especially mentioned the contributions “from the very large number of our separated brethren.” Outlining the peace time activities of the K. of C., he stated these to be largely devoted to the interests of Catholic boyhood before such reached the age of eligibility to society. Continuing, Mr. Boivin emphatically contradicted certain allegations levelled against the society. “It is not a secret society,” he declared, adding that such secrecy as did exist with respect of passwords, etc., was only intended “as a gentle surprise” for those becoming members. “It is a society of Catholic men, proud of their faith, and ready to prove with their lives that men can be good Catholics and the best of Canadian citizens,” reiterated Mr. Boivin.

In replying to the toast “Our Country,” Hon. George P. Graham, Minister of Militia, was in his usual genial mood and set the audience laughing when he contrasted his political experience in South Renfrew with that of Mr. Justice Latchford. “I knew when to leave Renfrew,” he said, “and therefore my judgment of the political atmosphere was better.” Speaking seriously, he stated that church relationships never formed a barrier to his friendship.

The Minister of Militia, in continuing his reply to the toast “Our Country,” exhorted that Canadians so live as to be worthy of the sacrifices made for this country by its sons, dead and living.



George Henri Boivin, K.C., M.P., Granby, Que., one of the original incorporators, Director and Member Executive Board K. of C. Catholic Army Huts, 1917-18-19-20. Elected Supreme Director of the Knights of Columbus at their supreme convention, Atlantic City, August 4th, 1922 for the period of three years. Created Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, 25th day of April, 1922, by His Holiness Pope Pius XI.



Linked with this toast was the name of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen. The leader of the Opposition in a telling speech said:—

I have come from the ranks of what you describe as 'The Separated Brethren' to be with you on this unique and interesting occasion. The Executive was kind enough to extend to me an invitation, and now I may say frankly I am glad to have come and to have listened to the sentiments expressed in many speeches of rare literary excellence. It was an opportunity by me gladly welcomed to witness the honours paid by this Order to Mr. Murray and Mr. Boivin. The first gentleman it had not been my advantage to know with any degree of personal intimacy but I had heard much of his energetic and unselfish services to the Army Huts Campaign.

Mr. Boivin was, as all Canadians who follow our politics know, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons throughout four of its most arduous years, and I, though opposed to him in politics, gladly pay tribute to the outstanding ability, the ingratiating courtesy and the unsullied fairness with which he discharged that onerous and difficult task. This night is a proud night for him and for his colleague and I know both have abundantly earned the distinction which their long services so worthily earned.

From the lips of Mr. Boivin I listened with intense interest to an explanation of the constitution and mission of the influential Order in which he has risen so high. He has assured us that there are no secret understandings, no secret commitments, and no purposes other than the achieving of legitimate good for the members of the Order, the stimulation of mutual improvement, and the helping of boys and young men to live creditable and worthy lives. Much would be gained if what Mr. Boivin has so strongly emphasized to-night could be scattered by way of information

throughout our entire country, thus dissipating prejudice and removing distrust.

For myself I can say, and for that matter call upon my life to witness, that though not of your faith I have borne and bear to-day not the least ill will toward my Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, that I have sought by fairness and impartiality, by word and act, to win their friendship and confidence, and that I hope still, no matter what circumstances of life may surround me, to do all that in me lies toward the establishment, in an open way and in real and permanent form, of relations of cordial trust and goodwill between men of all creeds and races.

The toast to our Overseas clergy was proposed by Mr. James E. McGlade of Brockville who spoke as follows:—

Mr. Chairman, Most Reverend and Reverend Sirs, Gentlemen:—Before I proceed to the proposal of this toast, may I, Sir, be permitted to add my felicitations to those that have been so generously offered Sir Knights Boivin and Murray. It goes without saying that the high honour conferred upon the gentlemen is well merited. It has not been my privilege to know Sir Knight Boivin nearly so well as I have known Sir Knight Murray, but I have known something of the splendid services Mr. Boivin has rendered the Knights of Columbus in a general way, and I am well aware of the great services he rendered on behalf of the Army Huts. I have, however, known Sir Knight Murray for a great many years, and if I may say so, somewhat intimately. I rejoice with his many friends and congratulate him upon the high honour he has won, and particularly so, because it has been so well merited. He is now Sir Knight Murray but I hereby give him notice that to me, and I feel, too, to many of his close friends, he will ever remain plain ordinary Joe Murray.

A word, Sir, and I shall proceed. Mr. Meighen has very gracefully said that speaking as a member

of the great Protestant body of citizens of this country, he, on their behalf, extends to his Catholic fellow citizens the assurance of their great respect and esteem and their desire to live with us in peace and amity. Speaking as one who thinks he knows something of the Catholic people of this country, I beg to assure Mr. Meighen and his fellow Protestant citizens that it is the earnest and honest desire of the Catholic people of Canada to at all times and in all places live in peace and harmony with our Protestant fellow citizens, all working hand in hand for the common good of our common country.

I am asked to propose the toast to the Overseas Chaplains. This is a signal honour and I could well hope that I might do so fittingly. To those of us who are acquainted with the early organization of the Catholic Army Huts, and, no doubt, to many others, it is well known that the first appeal to the Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of Canada for funds for this great work came from the Catholic Chaplains who were then Overseas. Happily the appeal was not in vain, but it is nevertheless true that if it had not been for the Overseas Catholic Chaplains, there might not have been Catholic Army Huts.

We do well, therefore, on this occasion to pay tribute to our Overseas Chaplains. The services they rendered cannot be told in words, nor valued in money. They, like the rest of the army, were engaged in the awful struggle with the Hun, doing their part as best they could, but they were also engaged in another still higher and still holier cause, fighting as it were God's fight for the salvation of souls. None of us know or can ever know what the presence of the Overseas Chaplain meant to our Catholic soldiers. None of us know or can ever know how many poor souls are to-day saints in Heaven because of the administrations of the Overseas Chaplains. With all due deference to the relation which exists

between those not of our faith and their ministers, and paying the highest tribute I may, and I do so gladly, to the splendid work of our Protestant ministers, both in everyday life and in the work done by the Protestant Chaplains Overseas, and without detracting in any way from the splendid value of such men, it is only fair to say, however, that there is a relation existing between the Catholic Priest and the Catholic layman which has no parallel in any other Christian Church. This relation may be, and is indeed, indefinable, but when we realize that no other men make the same kind of sacrifice, no other men devote their lives so unselfishly to the spiritual and oftentimes the temporal welfare of their people, it is not surprising if between the Catholic Priest and the Catholic laity there exists that indefinable relation. We respect, we esteem, we admire, we love them because they are to us and for us the representatives, the ambassadors of the Crucified Christ, carrying on the work He began, pointing the way not only to higher and to nobler things but pointing the way for us to Heaven and to God Himself.

When we remember the situation in which the soldiers found themselves, facing death daily and hourly in its most dreadful form, it is reasonable to assume that this indefinable relation, to which I have just referred, as existing between the Priest and the layman, it is reasonable, I say, to assume that this relation must have been greatly intensified as between the Catholic Chaplain and the Catholic Soldier. To the Overseas Chaplains, therefore, we offer the assurance not alone of the undying gratitude of the men they served so well, but likewise the gratitude of the relatives of those men and of the great body of the Catholic laity of Canada. We well know their services were given without hope of return. We well know also that they do not ask either to be thanked or toasted, but on an occasion such as this, as I said

at the outset, it is most fitting that some measure of tribute should be paid to that splendid body of Catholic priests to whom we refer as the Overseas Chaplains. Therefore, Sirs, I ask you to rise and drink to the health of the Overseas Chaplains.

In answering the toast to the Overseas Chaplains Rev. Father John J. O'Gorman, D.D., O.B.E., began by saying that owing to the lateness of the hour (it was then twenty minutes to twelve) his remarks would be necessarily brief. He spoke substantially as follows:—

Mr. Chairman, My Lord Archbishop, Your Lordship, Gentlemen:—On looking across this head table graced by distinguished representatives of Church and State, one might wonder how it is that I have a place here. The answer is that it was my good fortune to have introduced to the Catholic Army Huts, my friend, Commendatore George Boivin and my friend Comendatore J. L. Murray. A godfather is proud when his godson attains eminence. To-day it is my proud boast that, as regards the C. A. H., I was their sponsor.

When in the early spring of 1917 the Overseas Chaplains asked me to obtain assistance for them, I was aware that, as His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate has so well said, three things are necessary for the success of any Catholic work: that it be guided by the bishops, assisted by the priests, and supported by the people. His Excellency's distinguished predecessor, the late Monsignor Stagni, having assured the episcopal support, and the interest of my fellow priests being certain, all that remained was to organize the support of the laity. For this purpose I knew of no organization to which I could turn other than the Canadian Knights of Columbus.

Now a moment's consideration is sufficient to show that for every work which is to be national in its scope, the co-operation of the two oldest, richest and most

populous provinces of Canada, Ontario and Quebec, is required. To line up Ontario I knew of no one who was better able than the Ontario State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus, Mr. J. L. Murray of Renfrew; and history records how successfully he organized. To secure the cordial co-operation of Quebec, I knew of no man, and I have yet to learn of any man, who could do it save Mr. George Boivin, M.P. for Shefford, the Quebec State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus, and to-day the Canadian K. of C. Supreme Director. To-night we join in congratulating them both on their well merited papal honours.

In the name of the Overseas Catholic Military Chaplains (and I see with us to-night two chaplains of the Fourth Canadian Division, Father R. A. MacDonnell, M.C., and Father William Murray, M.C.), I wish to make it clear first of all that we make no claims for having done any work to distinguish us from the priests who during the war served the Church in Canada. Our work was precisely the same as theirs; we offered up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we administered the sacraments, we preached the word of God, we buried the dead. Nor can it be said that our ministry was more dangerous than that exercised at home. On the contrary twelve times more priests died victims of duty during the "Flu" epidemic in Canada than Canadian Chaplains of all denominations died during the whole war.

The one feeling which the Overseas Chaplains wish me to express in their name to-night is that of gratitude. We appealed to the Catholics of Canada through the Knights of Columbus for funds for Catholic Army Huts which would provide religious facilities for Catholic soldiers and social and recreation facilities for all soldiers irrespective of creed. The results of that appeal surpassed our modest expectations. To all who contributed, to the members of the hierarchy,

to the members of the clergy, to the Catholics and Protestants, and in a particular manner to the Canadian Knights of Columbus, our sincerest gratitude is offered.

We deeply appreciate the honour and approbation which the Holy Father has conferred on the Catholic Army Huts Association by conferring the rank of Knight Commander of St. Gregory the Great on its two original lay directors. We hope that the Canadian Knights of Columbus, following the suggestion made to them to-night by His Grace the Archbishop of Ottawa, will now turn their energies to the successful accomplishment of some great Catholic Peace Work in comparison with which their Great War Work will seem small indeed.

Linked with this toast was the name of Rev. J. J. Desjardins, who spoke as follows:—

Your Grace, Your Lordship and Gentlemen:— We are gathered here to assist at the decoration of two Knights in the person of Brother G. H. Boivin and J. L. Murray, who more than did their duty for the well-being of the soldiers during the Great War.

On the morrow of a battle, the general lists in the order of the day the bravest of the brave, and pins upon their breasts the emblem of sacrifice. To-night we have two of our own who come out of the ranks at the voice of the Supreme Head of the Church, to be made, by his representative, the Apostolic Delegate, Knight Commanders of the Order of St. Gregory the Great. Our most enthusiastic acclaim, our most cordial felicitations accompany them. After having been in toil, they are to-day in honour.

Congratulations on my own part to George Boivin, who in 1916 came, in spite of the many occupations to cast the seed of fraternity and union, in the city of Brockville, at a banquet given to the French-Canadian soldiers, by the Knights of Columbus of that place.

George is pre-eminently a Knight, he knows that strength lies in union, he aims at the union of Catholic forces, and not only he says it like many others, his acts prove it.

In the name of the Overseas Chaplains, I thank them both from the very bottom of my heart, for having founded Catholic Huts; for having furnished us with all needed for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, and for having given besides, objects of piety to our soldiers.

In as much as I am replying to the toast of the military chaplains, let my first homage go to my predecessor, Capt. Father Crochetière, of the 22nd French-Canadian Batt., who gave his life for his own on the plains of Artois, where he was heroically serving the soldiers of his regiment. Capt. Crochetière lived with his boys, in the trenches, on the defense, in attacks in open country, and this during weeks and months.

You came to our assistance, Gentlemen Knights; it was doubtless your duty, but you knew how to do it nobly.

I must also recognize the excellent work of the other associations who aided us greatly.

And since on the other side, the soldiers laboured in union, God grant, that returned to a regime of peace dearly bought, the deeds of our brave may help us make of Canada a prosperous and great country.

The toast to the "ORDER" was proposed by Mr. Justice Latchford and responded to by Judge J. A. Mulligan.

Among those present were:—His Excellency The Most Rev. Peter di Maria S. T. D., Ph.D., J.U.D., Apostolic Delegate to Canada; Most Reverend Joseph Medard Emard, D.D., Archbishop of Ottawa; Rt. Rev. Patrick T. Ryan, Bishop of Pembroke; Mr. Justice F. R. Latchford; Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen; Hon. Geo. P.

## *Catholic Army Huts Activities*

---

Graham; Mr. P. T. Legaré, K.C. St.G.G.; Lt.-Col. Very Rev. Canon L. A. Sylvestre, President Catholic Army Huts; Hon. M. J. O'Brien; Mr. F. H. Plant, Mayor of Ottawa; Rev. Dr. J. J. O'Gorman, O.B.E.; Hon. Thomas A. Low; the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus represented by Mr. John P. Dunne; Judge James A. Mulligan; Mr. H. Therien, Mayor of Hull; Mr. Ernest Bovin, Mayor of Granby; Mr. H. E. Comtois, Grand Knight of Granby Council K. of C.; Rev. R. Lamoureux, representing the Bishop of St. Hyacinth; Rev. E. E. Messaer, Parish Priest of Bedford, Que.; Mr. A. Bail, Grand Knight of Bedford Council K. of C.; Mr. Laurence I. McMahon of Dollard Assembly, Montreal; Mr. Louis Viens, Grand Knight of Lafontaine Council K. of C., Mr. H. Beaumier, Grand Knight of Joliette Council K. of C.; Mr. Hugh Macdonald, Mayor of Renfrew; Mr. George Hanrahan, Windsor, Ontario, State Deputy K.of C.; Mr. R. A. Jeffrey, Arnprior, Ontario State Treasurer K. of C.; Mr. W. J. Ryan, Asst. Secretary C.A.H.; Mr. W. T. Kernahan, Overseas Commissioner C. A. H.; Mr. W. J. McCaffrey, Ottawa, Master Fourth Degree K. of C.; Dr. Claude Brown, London, Master Fourth Degree K. of C.; Col. Rev. F. L. French, D.S.O.; Mr. James E. McGlade, Brockville, Ont. P.D.D. K. of C.; Mr. D. A. Jones, Pembroke, Ont. District Deputy K. of C.; Mr. J. J. O'Callaghan, Ottawa, Ont. District Deputy K. of C.; Capt. Rev. J. J. Desjardins, Hull, Que.; Capt. Rev. W. L. Murray, M.C. and bar, Campbell's Bay, Que.; Capt. Rev. R. A. Macdonell, M.C.; Rev. J. C. Beaudin, Quebec State Chaplain K. of C.; Rev. T. J. Warnock, Associate Editor Catholic Register, Toronto; Capt. Rev. A. Stanton; Mr. James H. Kelly, Pembroke, Ont., P.G.K., K. of C.; Rev. D. A. Casey, Litt. D., Kingston, Ont.; Mr. J. B. Bedard, Hull, Que., District Deputy K. of C.; Mr. John Grimes, Ottawa, Ont.; Mr. Gerald Sims, D.G.K., Ottawa Council K. of C.; Philip Phelan, G. K., Ottawa Council K. of C.; J. O. Leblanc, G. K. Champlain Council K. of C.; Mr. J. J. O'Brien, G.K., Pembroke Council K. of C.

C.; Mr. J. Hickey, G.K. Renfrew Council K. of C.; Mr. Thos. E. Brown, G.K. Bayswater Council K. of C.; Major Rev. John Knox, O.B.E., Guelph, Ont.; Rev. W. P. Breen, Pembroke, Ont.; Lt.-Col. George Roy, Ottawa, Ont.; Mrs. J. L. Murray and Misses Margaret and Stella Murray, Renfrew, Ont.; Mrs. William Murray, Pembroke, Ont.; Masters Henri and Marcel Boivin, Granby, Que.; Dr. and Mrs. M. J. Mulvihill, Pembroke, Ont.; Mrs. Elizabeth Donahue, Pembroke, Ont.; Mr. and Mrs. J. A. O'Brien, Ottawa, Ont.; Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Gorman, Ottawa, Ont.; Mrs. J. L. Murphy, Quebec, Que.; Mr. M. J. O'Brien, Jr. Renfrew, Ont.; Mr. H. A. Jordan, Renfrew, Ont.; Mr. J. C. Norton, Renfrew, Ont., and many others.

And so, with the vision of that night in Ottawa, when the Holy Father's approval was set upon our work, before our eyes, we think we may appropriately ring down the curtain upon the story of the Catholic Army Huts. As we wrote in the Introduction, so now we repeat that the compiling of this volume is not to be understood as an attempt to glorify the Knights of Columbus at the expense of any other patriotic organization. These pages that record the War Activities of the premier Catholic lay society of the Dominion enshrine, we believe, a record of service that goes to prove that when there is question of citizenship, distinctions of every kind are forgotten—and we are all just Canadians.

TRENT UNIVERSITY

0 1164 0412768 4

Date Due

OCT 13 1982

D622 .D3  
Daniel, I J E  
A history of the Canadian  
Knights of Columbus

DATE	ISSUED TO
	<b>158446</b>

ACL 5785'

**158446**





